

# 逍遙法外

*xiao1 yao2 fa3 wai4*

A man who had been robbing banks in Canada for decades without getting caught was finally nabbed.

The robber, known as the “vaulter bandit,” was arrested while vacationing in Switzerland.

He was sent back to Canada where he is facing 30 charges relating to 21 robberies committed in the Toronto area and Calgary, for which he could be jailed for more than 20 years.

While he was at large, he kept homes in France and Germany with a pair of girlfriends in each country. Whenever he ran low on cash, he would fly to Canada, rob a bank and then jump on a plane to return to Europe.

Life for the 53-year-old ex-US Navy man, before his arrest, may be described by the idiom “逍遙法外” (*xiao1 yao2 fa3 wai4*).

“逍遙” (*xiao1 yao2*) means “free and unfettered,” “stroll in freedom,” “法” (*fa3*) “the law” and “外”

## Idiom by Lon Yan

(*wai4*) “outside,” “beyond,” “above.” Literally, “逍遙法外” (*xiao1 yao2 fa3 wai4*) “to stroll freely outside of the law.” It means “to go scot-free,” “to be at large,” “to remain out of the law’s reach.”

The suspect was able to “逍遙法外” for so long because he had been using the same tactic – “jump over counters, grab money and dash.” Quick in, quick out. No hassle.

He was no longer able to “逍遙法外” (*xiao1 yao2 fa3 wai4*) because he changed his MO in his most recent heist – brandishing a pistol and locking a pregnant staffer in a vault. In the process, he left a key from his toolbox on which police found his DNA and tracked him down.

### Terms containing the character “法” (*fa3*) include:

法律 (*fa3 lu4*) – the law

法院 (*fa3 yuan4*) – a law court

法官 (*fa3 guan1*) – a judge

法國 (*fa3 guo2*) – France