

欺人太甚

qi1 ren2 tai4 shen4

Raccoons are a pain in the neck for Toronto residents. These animals open “green bins” placed outdoors to collect food waste for recycling, rummage through them for dinner, and leave frustrated house owners with the mess to clean up in the morning.

Different bin lock designs have been tried, and methods such as putting bricks on the lids or using bungee cords with hooks to tie them down have all failed to ward off these nocturnal raiders.

The raccoons’ ability to open bins is so uncanny that some joke it probably takes combination locks to keep them out, preferably with a four-digit code too! Many residents must feel that the raccoons have “欺人太甚” (*qi1 ren2 tai4 shen4*).

But recently, the city introduced a new lock that just might solve the long-standing problem.

To open the lid, you need to turn a big knob 90 degrees, a feat that is, according to proud city

Idiom by Lon Yan

officials, anatomically impossible for the raccoons, because they don’t have thumbs. It looks like it is the raccoon’s turn to say “欺人太甚” (*qi1 ren2 tai4 shen4*)!

“欺” (*qi1*), in this context, refers to “欺負” (*qi1 fu4*), “to bully,” “to insult,” “人” (*ren2*) is “people,” “others,” “太” (*tai4*) “too,” “excessively” and “甚” (*shen4*) “very,” “extremely.” Literally, “欺人太甚” (*qi1 ren2 tai4 shen4*) is “bully people too extremely.”

The idiom means “having gone too far in insult or injury.” Saying “You 欺人太甚 (*qi1 ren2 tai4 shen4*)!” to your tormentor means “That’s going too far,” “You have insulted me beyond the limit.”

Terms containing the character “欺” (*qi1*) include:

欺騙 (*qi1 pian4*) – to deceive; to cheat

欺凌 (*qi1 ling2*) – to bully and humiliate

欺壓 (*qi1 ya1*) – to tyrannize

欺侮 (*qi1 wu3*) – to insult