# 露 出 馬 腳

*lu4 chu1 ma3 jiao3*

It was like a scene straight out of the Steven Spielberg blockbuster *Catch Me If You Can* in which Leonardo Di Caprio, playing a real life con artist, tricks his way into the cockpit of an aircraft by wearing a fake pilot's uniform.

But the young man who recently donned the uniform of a pilot with a Cathay Pacific logo complete with an airline pass, was not so successful when he tried to gain access to the cockpit on a flight from Hong Kong to Penang, Malaysia.

The man was said to have "露出馬腳" (*lu4 chu1 ma3 jiao3*) when he ordered a cocktail that was not on the menu, and started taking pictures of his meal. His behavior aroused the suspicion of the cabin crew, who alerted ground officers and had him arrested when the aircraft landed.

The man was said to be about 18 years of age. It is very likely that the cabin crew did not believe him from the start because his appearance was not convincing at all – being too young and scrawny and his uniform was too loose. He must have "露出馬腳" (*lu4 chu1 ma3 jiao3*) the moment he started to claim to be a commercial pilot.

As a noun, "露" (*lu4*) is "dew." As a verb, it means "show," "reveal," "expose." "露出" (*lu4 chu1*) is also "to expose," "to reveal." "馬" (*ma3*) is "a horse" and "腳" (*jiao3*) "foot," "the leg of an animal." Literally, "露出馬腳" (*lu4 chu1 ma3 jiao3*) is "reveal horse leg."

"露出馬腳" (*lu4 chu1 ma3 jiao3*) means "to give oneself away," "to give the show away," "betrayed by a slip."

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**Terms containing the character "露" (*lu4*) include:**

暴露 (*bao4 lu4*) – to lay bare

露水 (*lu4 shui3*) – dew

露骨 (*lu4 gu3*) – undisguised

露營 (*lu4 ying2*) – camping