

心狠手辣

xin1 hen3 shou3 la4

A man drugged his girlfriend before bashing her head with a weight-lifting disc until she passed out. When the woman came to, she discovered that her arms and leg had been tied up, and the boyfriend gone. She had to wriggle across the floor and kicked on the door to get help.

The attack at a public housing flat in Ngau Tau Kok reportedly occurred after a quarrel during which the woman told the man she wanted to end the relationship.

It was vicious and could easily have caused death. It was clearly not on the spur of the moment as the man must have made prior preparations to have the drug ready for use.

“心狠手辣” (*xin1 hen3 shou3 la4*) is the idiom to describe what kind of person the man is.

“心” (*xin1*) is “the heart,” “狠” (*hen3*) “cruel,” “ruthless,” “手” (*shou3*) “the hand,” and “辣” (*a4*) also means “ruthless.” “心狠手辣” (*xin1*

Idiom by Lon Yan

hen3 shou3 la4), literally, is “heart cruel, hand ruthless.” It means “cruel,” “harsh,” “ruthless.”

Another version of the idiom is “心黑手辣” (*xin1 hei1 shou3 la4*), literally “heart black hand ruthless,” meaning “black-hearted and cruel,” “callous.”

“心狠手辣” (*xin1 hen3 shou3 la4*) is used to describe perpetrators of vicious and cruel acts.

It usually refers to acts that result in serious physical harm. Had the man become emotional and slapped the woman it is bad conduct but not exactly “心狠手辣” (*xin1 hen3 shou3 la4*). Framing someone and put him or her in jail is “心狠手辣” (*xin1 hen3 shou3 la4*).

Terms containing the character “黑” (*hei1*) include:

黑板 (*hei1 ban3*) - a blackboard

黑心 (*hei1 xin1*) - black-hearted; lack of conscience

黑名單 (*hei1 ming2 dan1*) - a blacklist

黑暗 (*hei1 an4*) - dark; sinister