

一諾千金

yi2 nuo4 qian1 jin1

To wear or not to wear? That must be the question that has been vexing Emily Lau Wai-hing. Reporters had dug up an old picture of her doing live reporting on the streets aeons ago when she was a television journalist. In it, she was wearing a slip dress.

Early this year the Democratic Party chairman told reporters she still had that dress in her wardrobe, it still fits, and that she will wear it for everyone to see before her Legislative Council term is over.

Months passed, nothing happened. And at the start of her last press briefing at Legco as a member, she said preemptively that she had not forgotten the promise: "I will not wear it today, but I will do so at an occasion where there are more people and, better still, there is a live television broadcast too."

For added effect, she said, "When did Emily Lau ever go back on her promise?" When people honor their promise, we describe it as "一諾千金" (*yi2 nuo4 qian1 jin1*).

Idiom by Lon Yan

"一" (*yi2*) is "one", "諾" (*nuo4*) "promise," "千" (*qian1*) "one thousand," "a great amount" and "金" (*jin1*) "gold," "precious." "千金" (*qian1 jin1*) means "a thousand pieces of gold," "a lot of money." It is also "a courteous expression referring to another's daughter."

Literally, "一諾千金" (*yi2 nuo4 qian1 jin1*) is "one promise is worth one thousand gold pieces," "a promise that is worth a great amount of gold." The idiom means "a promise that will be kept," "a solemn promise."

Well, we'll see if Lau's slip-dress promise is really worth "千金" (*qian1 jin1*).

Terms containing the character "金" (*jin1*) include:

金錢 (*jin1 qian2*) – money; cash

金屬 (*jin1 shu3*) – metal

金融 (*jin1 rong2*) – finance

白金 (*bai2 jin1*) – platinum