

引狼入室

yin3 lang2 ru4 shi4

There has been a spate of terrorist attacks in Europe this year, and quite a few of them occurred in July.

A Hong Kong family unfortunately got caught in one, with its members suffering serious injuries after being attacked on a German train by an “ISIS-supporting” refugee from Afghanistan.

Earlier in Nice, a terrorist used a truck to ram into crowds, killing 84 people and injuring hundreds of others. A bombing at Brussels airport killed 32 and wounded 300.

The liberal admission of North African and Middle Eastern refugees by some European countries has been blamed for having facilitated terrorism as it had allowed terrorists to enter by posing as refugees. Some commentators called the situation “引狼入室” (*yin3 lang2 ru4 shi4*).

“引” (*yin3*) is “to lead,” “to attract,” “to cause or induce,” “狼” (*lang2*) “a wolf,” “入” (*ru4*) “to enter” and “室”

Idiom by Lon Yan

(*shi4*) is “a room.” “引狼入室” (*yin3 lang2 ru4 shi4*), literally, is “to lead a wolf into the room.” The idiom means “to bring in a troublemaker,” “to ask for trouble.”

“狼” (*lang2*), the wolf, is a metaphor for something that is vicious and deadly, or at least harmful. To bring a wolf into your room is clearly not wise.

If a manager grooms a subordinate but the subordinate ends up taking the manager’s job, the manager could be said to have “引狼入室” (*yin3 lang2 ru4 shi4*).

It is also “引狼入室” (*yin3 lang2 ru4 shi4*) if you let a colleague stay in your house until she finds a place of her own but she takes your jewelry and disappears.

Terms containing the character “室” (*shi4*) include:

室內 (*shi4 nei4*) – indoor; interior

室外 (*shi4 wai4*) – outdoor; outside

課室 (*ke4 shi4*) – classroom

實驗室 (*shi2 yan4 shi4*) – a laboratory