

Idiom by Lon Yan

無奇不有

wu2 qi2 bu4 you3

A mainland insurance company was reported to be offering “romance” policies. One kind pays 10,000 stems of roses if the insured manages to get married within three years. Another kind, for single people, requires a premium of only 1.5 yuan but pays only up to 9.9 yuan if the insured “un-singled” – finding a boyfriend or girlfriend - within six months.

The news report described these policies as “無奇不有” (wu2 qi2 bu4 you3).“

“無” (wu2) is “without,” “nil,” “奇” (qi2) “unusual,” “strange,” “odd,” “不” (bu4) “no,” “not” and “有” (you3) “to have,” “to exist.” “無奇不有” (wu2 qi2 bu4 you3) is, literally, “no strange not have.”

The idiom means “nothing is too bizarre,” “full of extraordinary things.” People usually utter this idiom when they come across

something really bizarre and extraordinary as an expression of amazement or amusement.

“無奇不有” (wu2 qi2 bu4 you3) is similar to the English saying “What do you know?” which is also an expression of surprise.

In fact, with a quick search on the internet, one can easily find quite a few unusual insurance policies, including those covering the voices of famous singers and certain well-known body parts of well-known actresses.

When a new species of fish with 200 eyes and no tail is discovered at the bottom of the ocean, one can say it is “無奇不有” (wu2 qi2 bu4 you3). When your boss comes to work one morning in pyjamas, it is also an occasion for saying “無奇不有” (wu2 qi2 bu4 you3), not to his or her face, of course!

Terms containing the character “奇” (qi2) include:

奇怪 (qi2 guai4) – strange’ queer

奇蹟 (qi2 ji4) – a miracle; a wonder

奇妙 (qi2 miao4) – marvelous; wonderful

奇想 (qi2 xiang3) – a strange idea