

Idiom by Lon Yan

丟人現眼

diu1 ren2 xian4 yan3

A Florida man flaunted his money in a live broadcast on Facebook. With a big grin, he waved a wad of banknotes in front of the camera, gloating: "This s*** didn't stop, man!"

Unbeknownst to him, the police was at the front door. Suddenly, a stern voice boomed through a megaphone in the background: "This is Jacksonville sheriff's office. We have a search warrant. Open the front door!"

That wiped the smugness (沾沾自喜) off the man's face. In a panic, he quickly disappeared behind a door.

CNN reported that police found drugs and drug-making equipment in the house. The man was in custody. We don't know if he has committed a crime, but broadcasting one's own arrest to the world, even if inadvertently, was certainly "丟人現眼" (*diu1 ren2 xian4 yan3*).

"丟" (*diu1*) is "to lose," "to toss," "to discard," "人" (*ren2*) "a person," "people," "others," "other people." "丟人" (*diu1 ren2*) is "to lose face," "to be disgraced," "to make a spectacle of oneself," "to make a laughing-stock of oneself."

"現" (*xian4*) is "current," "present," "to appear," "to show," and "眼" "eye," "an aperture or hole." "現眼" (*xian4 yan3*), as a term, means "to lose face," "to make a fool of oneself," "to be disgraced."

Literally, "丟人現眼" (*diu1 ren2 xian4 yan3*) is "lose face in front of others." The idiom means "to make an exhibition of oneself," "to be a disgrace."

If someone makes a fool of himself or herself, and you want to rub it in, you can say "丟人現眼" (*diu1 ren2 xian4 yan3*)!

Terms containing the character "丟" (*diu1*) include:

丟棄 (*diu1 qi4*) – to abandon; to dump

丟開 (*diu1 kai1*) – to cast aside; to forget for a while

丟臉 (*diu1 lian3*) – to lose face

丟失 (*diu1 shi1*) – to lose