



活用成語

USING IDIOMS



Scene from a wall painting at Taipei's Baoan Gong Temple, taken Aug 21.

PHOTO: PAUL COOPER, TAIPEI TIMES

台北保安宮內的壁畫，攝於八月二十一日。
照片：台北時報記者古德謙攝

CHINESE PRACTICE

中箭落馬

(zhong4 jian4 luo4 ma3)

Struck by an arrow and falling from your horse

成語「中箭落馬」，其字面意思是指戰鬥中的騎士在馬上中了箭，於是從馬背上墜落。中國文學作品中的例子不少，光是描寫從東漢末年到西晉初年近百年間歷史的「三國演義」中即有好幾個，例如：「鄧艾見兵出，便撤兵退。膽奮力追殺，忽然一聲炮響，四面兵合，把膽困在垓心。膽引兵左衝右突，殺死數百人。艾令眾軍放箭射之，蜀兵四散，膽中箭落馬」；又如：「忽然狂風大起，忠急退時，山坡上馬忠引一軍，出一箭射中黃忠肩窩，險些兒落馬。」

在應用上，「中箭落馬」可以比喻在戰爭或競賽中受到重大挫折或失敗。

英文中也有類似的說法，就是“suffer a serious setback.”

(台北時報記者古德謙整理)

- ◆ 這次的貪污事件波及的人很多，連許多形象良好的政治人物也都中箭落馬。

(Many people were caught up in this corruption scandal, and even lots of politicians with good reputations have been damaged by it.)

- ◆ 三支台北的隊伍都中箭落馬，紛紛敗給高雄的隊伍。

(Three Taipei teams suffered severe setbacks, being defeated one after the other by the Kaohsiung team.)

英文練習

suffer a serious setback

The Chinese idiom 中箭落馬 literally means when a rider on horseback is struck by an arrow and falls from his horse. There are many instances of it in Chinese literature. The *Romance of the Three Kingdoms*, which recounts the history of a period of almost 100 years between the end of the Eastern Han and the beginning of the Western Jin dynasties, alone has quite a few. These include:

“Seeing the enemy sally forth, Deng Ai quickly withdrew, and Zhan gave vigorous chase. A cannon boomed, and troops

closed in on them from all sides. Zhan fought furiously, killing hundreds, but when Deng Ai had his archers let fly at the Shu soldiers, they dispersed. Zhan himself was hit and fell from his horse” and, “Suddenly a storm blew up, and as Huang Zhong was passing some hills, Ma Zhong’s army, from on top of the slope, fired a sally of arrows, one of which wounded Huang Zhong in the armpit, so that he almost fell from his horse.”

Therefore, the proverb 中箭落馬 can be used as a metaphor for when a person is hit by a major setback in war or some other form of contest, to the extent that their cause is severely frustrated, or that they, in fact, lose.

In English there is a similar phrase for this kind of situation: to “suffer a serious setback.”

(Paul Cooper, Taipei Times)

- ◆ The scientists suffered a serious setback when the equipment overheated and exploded halfway through the experiment.

(在實驗進行到一半的時候，實驗儀器過熱引發了爆炸，科學團隊因此遭遇了極大的挫折。)