

Wǔ 物 **yǐ** 以 **lěi** 类 **jiù** 聚

What the... Birds of a feather flock together.

Lit: Things of the same characteristics congregate together.

niú 牛 **bù** 不 **yǐ** 以 **shuǐ** 水 **bù** 不 **néng** 能 **àn** 按 **niú** 牛 **tóu** 头 **dī** 低

What the... You can lead a horse to water, but you can't make him drink.

Lit: You cannot push a cow's head down unless it is drinking water by its own will.

Jiāo 骄 **bīng** 兵 **bì** 必 **bài** 败

What the... Pride goes before a fall.

Lit: The arrogant (or over-confident) army will lose the battle for sure.

Yī 一 **jiàn** 箭 **shuāng** 双 **diāo** 雕

What the... Kill two birds with one stone.

Lit: Shoot two birds with one single arrow.

Běn 本 **xìng** 性 **nán** 难 **yí** 移

What the... Old habits die hard.

Lit: It's impossible to change your basic characteristics. A leopard cannot change its spots.

sān 三 **gè** 个 **hé shang** 和尚 **dān** 担 **shuǐ** 水 **wú** 无 **zhōu** 粥 **shí** 食

What the... Too many cooks spoil the broth.

Lit: 3 monks fetching water resulted in no rice gruel (to eat.)

yī 一 **jiàng** 将 **gōng** 功 **chéng** 成 **wàn** 万 **gǔ** 骨 **kū** 枯

What the... What thousands must die so that Caesar may become great.

Lit: Tens of thousands of bones will become ashes when one general achieves his fame.

zhōng 一 **rì** 刻 **pà** 怕 **wén** 蚊 **dīng** 叮 咬, **zhōng** 一 **rì** 日 **pà** 怕 **wén** 蚊 **dīng** 叮 叮

What the... Once bitten, twice shy.

Lit: Once bitten by a mosquito, you worry about mosquitoes all day. Once bitten by a snake, you are even frightened by a rope that resembles a snake.

jīn yù 金玉 **qí** 其 **wài** 外, **bài** 败 **xù** 絮 **qí** 其中 **zhōng** 中

What the... All that glitters is not gold and beware of the skeleton in the closet.

Lit: Golden coloured on the outside, but rotten inside. (This is from a fable, "What the tangerine hawker said". The golden colour refers to the skin of the tangerine.)