

Lesson 1 – “Love: the fine print”

Text Translation (English)

A radio station wanted to pick out a married couple¹ who are the most loving. After comparing, there were 3 couples who entered the finals².

The panel³ asked the first couple to tell them how they are loving. The wife said, years ago she was completely paralyzed⁴, and the doctor said the possibility of her ever standing up again is slim. All the others thought that her husband would divorce her, and she also contemplated suicide. But her husband kept on encouraging her, looked for countless hospitals for her⁵, and took care for her for years as if it were a day, and never complained. Under the care and effort of her husband, finally she stood up again. Her story were very moving⁶, all the judges were deeply touched after hearing it.

Then enter the second couple, they said, in over ten years of married life, they have never gotten red-faced or fought over anything, always loving each other, respecting each other. After hearing it, the judges nodded quietly⁷.

It's the third couple's turn⁸, but no one showed up⁹ for a long time. The judges

1 一对夫妻：对 = a pair; 夫 = 丈夫; 妻 = 妻子

2 入围：“围” was formerly written as “闾”，lit. side door to a palace. 入围 lit. means entering a closed quarter. Nowadays it means entering the finals, or qualifying rounds of a competition.

3 评委：就是“评价委员会” (evaluating committee), 也可以是“评价委员” (evaluating committee member).

4 全身：全部身体。全身瘫痪：全部，整个身体都瘫痪了。

5 为她不知找了多家医院：不知多少 (one does not know how many) = countless

6 感人：让人感动

7 暗暗：“暗”本来的意思是“没有光，很黑”。但是在这里，“暗暗”的意思是“没有声音”，on the quiet.

8 轮到：轮到你 = it's your turn. 轮 = 轮子 = wheel. Imagine a roulette wheel, when it stops spinning, if it points at you, it's your “turn”.

9 不见人：lit. [we] don't see anyone

started to lose patience¹⁰, so they walked out to see just what's going on¹¹. Look,¹² the third couple is still sitting outside the door, the man's head leaning on the woman's shoulder, having fallen asleep. A judge wanted to go forward and shout at the guy awake, but the woman stretched out her finger and made a shushing gesture, then carefully took out a pen and paper from her purse, wrote a line of crooked text with her left hand, and handed to the judge. And her right shoulder allowed her husband's head to lean on the whole time. The judges saw what's written on the note¹³: Don't make a sound, he didn't sleep well yesterday night. A judge lift the pen and wrote a sentence after her words¹⁴: But ma'am, we have to hear your (lit. you couple) relating¹⁵ [your story]! The woman wrote again: We just won't participate any more then.

Everyone was shocked, how could it be that¹⁶, this woman would rather give up the opportunity so as not to disturb her husband's sleep! But the panel still decided not to rush them for now, but rather wait a while longer.

After a while, the man woke up. The judges asked him why he was that tired. The man embarrassingly smiled and said: "My home is¹⁷ on the first floor, there are lots of mosquitos. Yesterday midnight, I was woken up by a mosquito bite¹⁸, and I was afraid that my wife would be woken up again by the noise, so I spent the second half of the night repelling mosquitos for her.

¹⁰ 等得有些不耐烦: Note the structure V+得+result. They waited so long that they got a bit impatient. See grammar 3.16.2 and 4.15.2

¹¹ 究竟: In grammar 4.20.3, we learned that 究竟 = 到底 = "what in the world?" "V个究竟" means to investigate just what really is going on: 看个究竟, 听个究竟, 查个究竟

¹² 只见: When you just finished doing something, and then immediately something new enters your sight, you can start the sentence with 只见.....

¹³ 纸条: lit. paper slip.

¹⁴ 续写: 就是接着前面的继续写。

¹⁵ 叙述: to tell a story. Here it means the act of telling. Chinese verbs can often function like nouns. To learn more about the flexible use of Chinese words, the "Difficult Points" video in the HSK 4 course, under Lesson 5, Text 3.

¹⁶ 居然: 就是“竟然”。See grammar 5.01.3.

¹⁷ 我家住一楼: “我家住(在)” is a set phrase that means “my home is located at”. 我家住在北京。我家就住学校附近。你家住哪儿?

¹⁸ 被蚊子叮醒了: 被蚊子叮了, 接着就醒了。“叮” only means to sting (with a thorn) not bite (with a mouth). The result of 叮 is 醒 (to wake up).

The final result was, the radio station added two awards, awarding the first couple as “couple sharing trials”, the second couple as “respectful couple”, but the real “most loving couple” award was given to the third couple.

Modified from *Jinri Wenzha*¹⁹

¹⁹ 《今日文摘》, meaning “today’s digest”, can be read here: <http://www.todayabc.com/>