

Section One

It's a Zoo Out There

第一篇 外面就是动物园

1

Smell a Rat



feel that something is wrong
感到不对劲儿

A: How come [*why*] the front door is open? Didn't you close it before we went shopping?

B: I'm sure I did. I can't understand it.

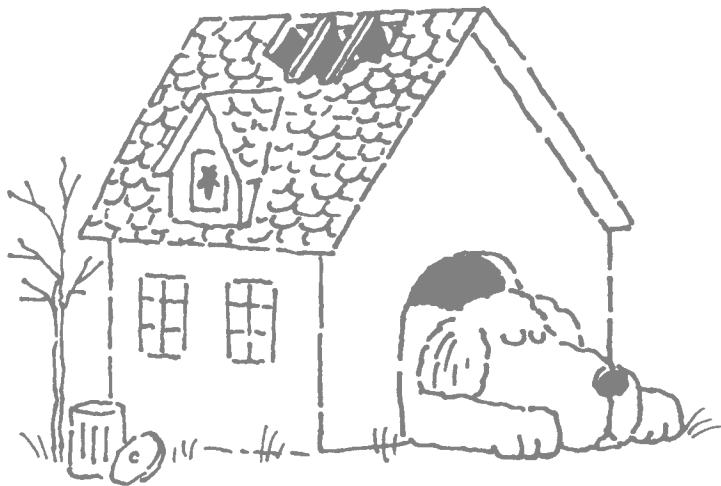
A: Frankly [*in fact*], I smell a rat.

B: Me, too. I'm convinced [*believe*] that something is definitely [*must be*] wrong here.

A: We'd better call the police.

2

Go to the Dogs



become run-down
变得很破旧；年久失修

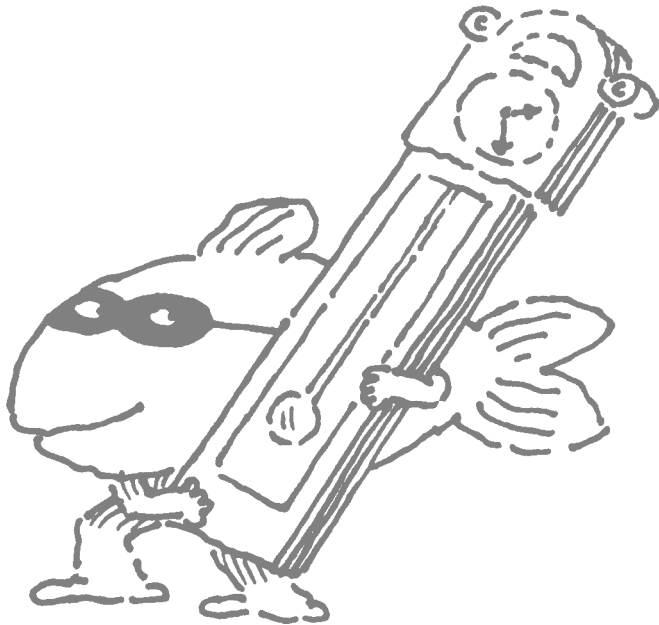
A: Have you seen their house lately? It's really **gone to the dogs**.

B: It's true that it has **become run-down and in serious need of repair**, but I'm sure that it can be fixed up to look like new.

A: I guess with a little carpentry work [*repairing wooden structures*] and some paint it could look pretty decent [*good enough to be shown to people*].

3

Fishy

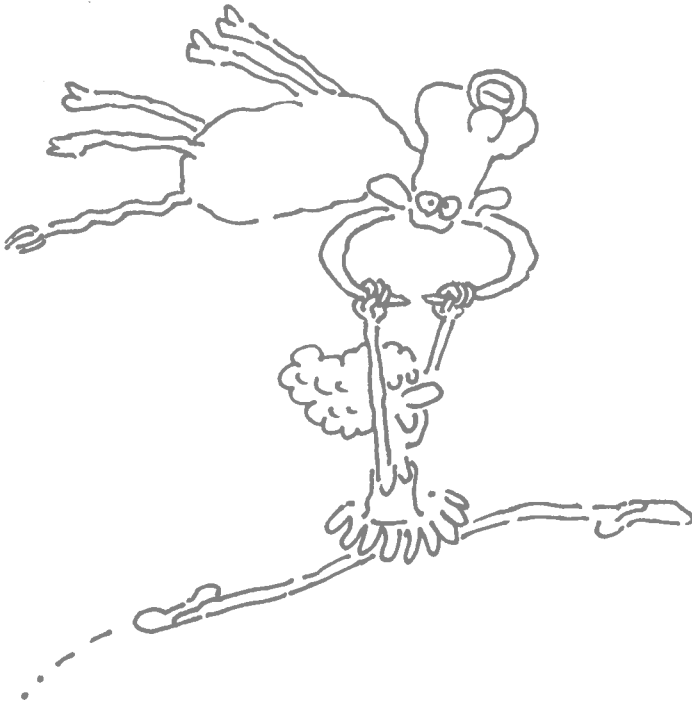


strange and suspicious
奇怪的；可疑的

When the security guard saw a light in the store after closing hours, it seemed to him that there was something **fishy** going on. He called the central office and explained to his superior that he thought something **strange and suspicious** was occurring [*going on*].

4

Take the Bull
by the Horns



take decisive action in
a difficult situation
在困境中采取果断的行动

Julie had always felt that she was missing out on a lot of fun because of her clumsiness on the dance floor [*she was not good at dancing*]. She had been putting off taking lessons, but she finally **took the bull by the horns** and went to a professional dance studio [*people there can dance and teach dancing very well*] for help. She was tired of feeling left out and **acted decisively to correct the situation.**

5

Horse of a Different Color



quite a different matter
完全是另外一回事儿

Eric likes to play jokes on his friends, but he makes sure that nobody is hurt by any of his pranks [*tricks and jokes*]. A prank that hurts someone is a **horse of a different color!** Being playful [*humorous*] is one thing, but hurting someone by one's prank is **quite a different matter.**

6

Let the Cat Out
of the Bag



inform beforehand 提前通知

Bob was going to retire from teaching in June, and the foreign language department was planning on presenting [*giving*] him with some luggage at his retirement dinner. He wasn't supposed to know about it, but someone **let the cat out of the bag**. At the dinner Bob acted surprised, even though someone **had told him what he was getting before the official presentation** [*giving out*].

7

For the Birds

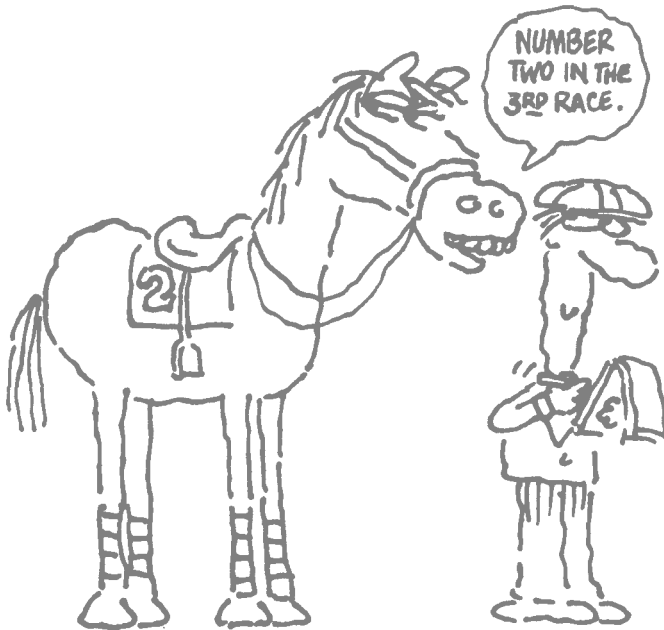


uninteresting and meaningless
毫无意义的；没趣的；乏味的

They went to a poetry reading, but they got bored and restless. As far as they were concerned [*they thought*], it was **for the birds!** They left during an intermission [*break*] because they found the reading **totally uninteresting and meaningless.**

8

Straight from the Horse's Mouth



from a reliable source
根据可靠的来源

A: How did you find out that Jill was engaged?

B: I got the information **from a very reliable source**.

A: You mean Jill told you so herself?

B: That's right. I got it **straight from the horse's mouth!**