

BÓYÌ 博弈 · WEEK 10

xiào lǐ cáng dāo

笑里藏刀

*A knife hidden in a smile.*

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Over 2,300 years ago, the king of Wei sent a beautiful woman to the king of Chu, as a gift. His wife, Zheng Xiu, took care of the new woman better than the king did: she picked the clothes and the rooms the new woman liked, and gave her the best of everything. Then, with one kind sentence, the new woman lost her nose and her place. This week you'll learn to write four characters: 笑, 里, 藏, 刀.

Stratagem No. 10 of 36 · one story, one lesson, four characters.

本周学：笑里藏刀 · 练字：笑、里、藏、刀

# A GIFT FOR THE KING OF CHU

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*Behind a pillar, the wife watches the new woman come in.*

According to the old book Zhan Guo Ce, this happened over two thousand three hundred years ago.

The king of Wei sent a beautiful woman to the king of Chu, as a gift. The king of Chu loved her.

His wife was named Zheng Xiu. She watched the new woman arrive.

She loved the new woman more than the king did. She picked the clothes and rooms the new woman liked.

She gave her the best of everything. The king saw this, and was moved. He said: jealousy is a woman's nature. His wife has none.

《战国策·楚策四》

# A WARM FACE



*A warm face, and one hand over the new woman's hand.*

And his wife knew he thought that.

So she went to the new woman and said: the king loves your face. But he hates your nose.

And she said it with a warm face. When you see him, cover it.

The new woman believed her. She covered her nose every time. The king asked his wife: why does the new woman do that? She said: she seems to hate the smell of you.

The king said: how dare she. The order was carried out. She lost her nose, and her place. But the other old book adds one line: she had told the servants first.

《战国策·楚策四》《韩非子·内储说下》

## WHY IT WORKED

| Step      | Who vs who                          | 中文 · pinyin | Result                           |
|-----------|-------------------------------------|-------------|----------------------------------|
| Smile     | She gave her the best of everything | 笑 xiào      | It was the door                  |
| Warm face | One sentence got in                 | 里 lǐ        | A knife you cannot see           |
| Step back | Her hand stayed empty               | 藏刀 cáng dāo | The hand belongs to someone else |

刀不在她手里，刀在她的笑里。笑里藏刀 xiào lǐ cáng dāo

# THE ORIGINAL LINES

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《三十六计·第十计 笑里藏刀》

*The Thirty-Six Stratagems, No. 10 — "A knife hidden in a smile"*

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1

xìn ér ān zhī yīn yǐ tú zhī

信而安之，陰以圖之，

*Make him trust you and rest easy. Work in the dark.*

---

2

bèi ér hòu dòng wù shǐ yǒu biàn

備而後動，勿使有變。

*Move only when it is ready.*

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3

gāng zhōng róu wài yě

剛中柔外也。

*Hard inside, soft outside.*

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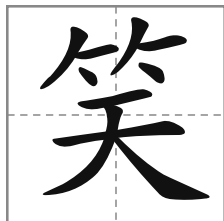
Three lines, nothing more: twenty-one characters. The long commentary that follows in old editions is about a different man, in a later dynasty, and is not part of this text.

原文只有这三句，二十一个字。后面那段按语是老版本的注释，讲的是宋朝另一个人的事，不进原文框。

# PRACTICE · 笑 XIÀO · 里 Lǐ

Follow the numbers. Write each stroke in order.

先描一遍分解格，再在田字格里写 5 遍。

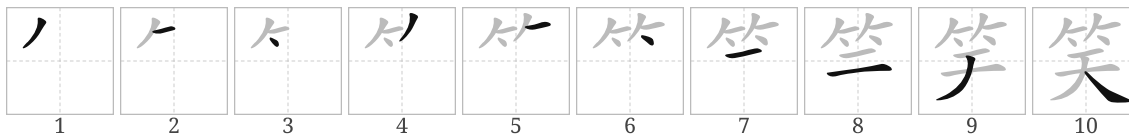


xiào

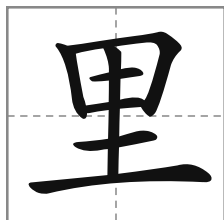
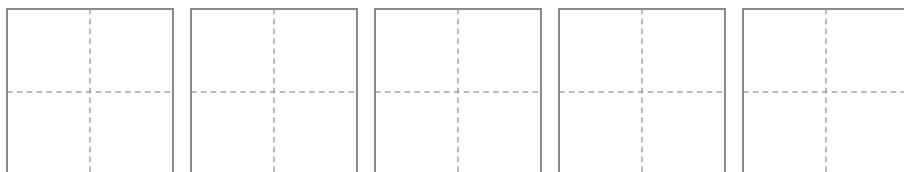
*to smile*

10 strokes

STROKE ORDER



YOUR TURN



lǐ

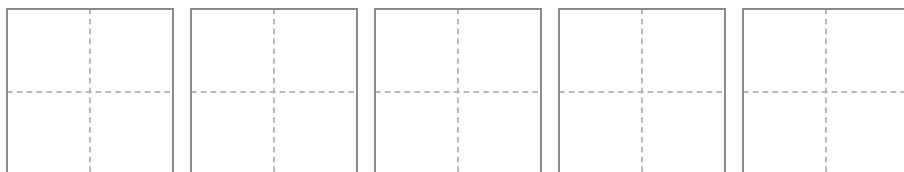
*inside*

7 strokes

STROKE ORDER



YOUR TURN



# PRACTICE · 藏 Cáng · 刀 Dāo

Same order again. Write slowly, and say the sound out loud.

写完 4 个字，再回到第 7 页连写整句。

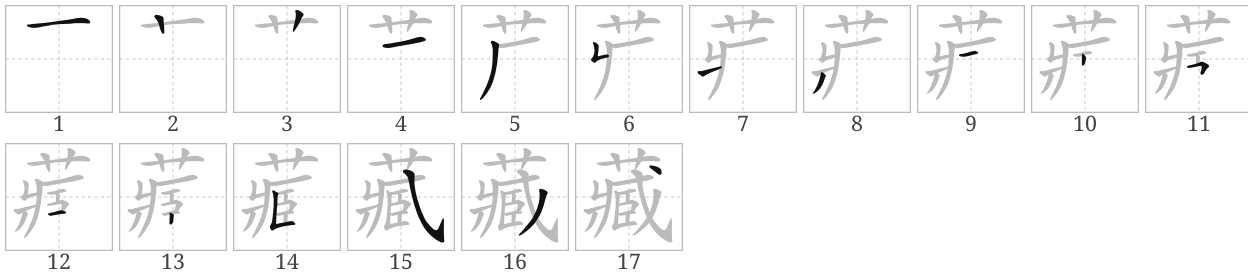


cáng

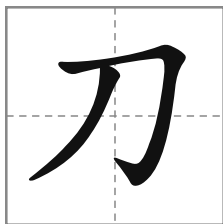
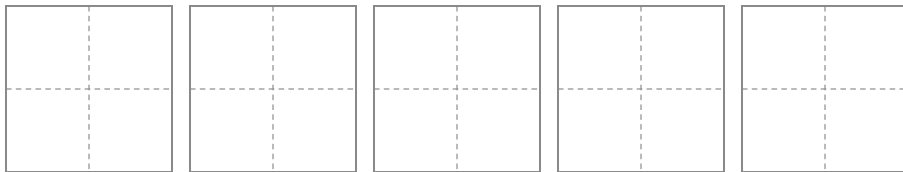
to hide

17 strokes

STROKE ORDER



YOUR TURN

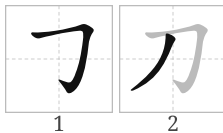


dāo

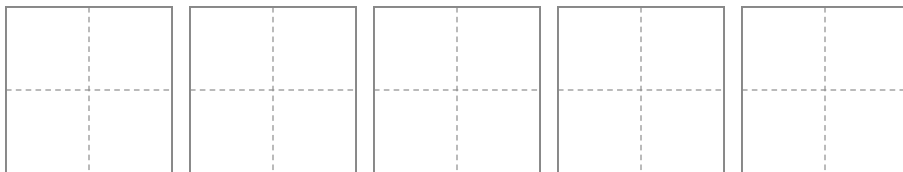
knife

2 strokes

STROKE ORDER



YOUR TURN



# PRACTICE · 笑里藏刀 XIÀO Lǐ Cáng Dāo

Trace the first row, then write the whole phrase four times. Say it out loud each time.

|      |    |      |     |
|------|----|------|-----|
| xiào | lǐ | cáng | dāo |
| 笑    | 里  | 藏    | 刀   |
|      |    |      |     |
|      |    |      |     |
|      |    |      |     |
|      |    |      |     |

笑里藏刀 · A knife hidden in a smile.

# THREE MORE WORDS

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jiàn yì

## 1 建议

advice.

yǒu yì tiān tā gěi nǐ yì tiáo jiàn yì      shuō de xiàng tí xǐng  
有一天她给你一条建议，说得像提醒。

*One day she gives you advice, like a warning.*

In this family, nobody corrects anyone at the table.

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chén mò

## 2 沉默

silence.

tā bǎ zhè fèn chén mò dài dào ér zǐ miàn qián      hái gěi tā qǐ le ge míng zì  
她把这份沉默带到儿子面前，还给它起了个名字。

*She takes that silence to her son, and names it.*

She never lied.

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tiáo kuǎn

## 3 条款

the terms; the clauses.

nǐ de tiáo kuǎn kě yǐ yìng      nǐ de liǎn bú bì yìng  
你的条款可以硬，你的脸不必硬。

*Your terms are hard. Your face does not have to be.*

Nothing hidden. Nothing broken.

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# SPOT IT · STOP IT 识破 · 防住

She warned you while she was smiling. Later she took your silence to her son, and gave it a name. Every word she said to you was kind, and nothing she said was a lie.

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>外面软 · 里面有</p> <p><i>Warm outside, hard inside</i></p> <p>tiáo kuǎn zài zhǐ shàng</p> <p>条 款 在 纸 上</p> <p><i>The terms are on paper</i></p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>rén hái zài duì miàn</p> <p>人 还 在 对 面</p> <p><i>The person is still across the table</i></p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>huà méi sī pò</p> <p>话 没 撕 破</p> <p><i>Nobody has to shout</i></p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> | <p>外面软 · 里面空</p> <p><i>Warm outside, empty inside</i></p> <p>zhǐ yǒu hǎo huà</p> <p>只 有 好 话</p> <p><i>Only kind words</i></p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>zhǐ shì kōng de</p> <p>纸 是 空 的</p> <p><i>The page is empty</i></p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>qián shì bié rén de</p> <p>钱 是 别 人 的</p> <p><i>The money is someone else's</i></p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

Two ways to use a smile. One is a manner. The other is a trap. Same face, different thing inside. So, one line: hard inside, soft outside.

一个笑，有两种用法：一种是修养，一种是陷阱。一样的脸，里面不一样。一句话：里面硬，外面软。

# SEVEN DAYS, SEVEN QUESTIONS

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**Day 1** Which words did you believe, only because they were said kindly? 好话 hǎo huà

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**Day 2** Who gives you advice that sounds like a warning? 提醒 tí xǐng

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**Day 3** Which sentence of yours came back to you in someone else's words? 一句话 yí jù huà

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**Day 4** What did you stop saying at a table, and who noticed first? 沉默 chén mò

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**Day 5** Who is warm to your face — and where is their hand? 手 shǒu

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**Day 6** Which promise only holds while it costs nothing? 承诺 chéng nuò

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**Day 7** What would you check with one more person before you follow that advice? 对一次 duì yí cì

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# WEEK 10 REVIEW



Yoko  
Read the 36 Stratagems with Yoko

第 10 计 / 36

## 笑里藏刀

xiào lǐ cáng dāo

信而安之，阴以图之，备而后动，勿使有变。刚中柔外也。

Trust and ease. Work in the dark. Ready, then move. Hard inside, soft outside.

|                   |                              |   |                            |   |                              |
|-------------------|------------------------------|---|----------------------------|---|------------------------------|
| 古<br>THEN         | 信而安之<br>TRUST AND EASE       | → | 阴以图之<br>WORK IN THE DARK   | → | 备而后动<br>READY, THEN MOVE     |
| 理<br>THE LOGIC    | 笑是门<br>THE SMILE IS THE DOOR | → | 脸与手<br>A FACE / A HAND     | → | 手是别人的<br>SOMEONE ELSE'S HAND |
| 今<br>TODAY        | 热情夹菜<br>A WARM WELCOME       | → | 照话沉默<br>SAY NOTHING        | → | 带给儿子<br>TAKEN TO HER SON     |
| 正用<br>DO IT CLEAN | 条款硬<br>HARD TERMS            | → | 对人客气<br>WARM TO THE PERSON | → | 先写下来<br>WRITE IT DOWN        |

HARD INSIDE, SOFT OUTSIDE · Watch the hand. Not the face.

The one-page summary of this week. 本周一图总结。

1. In one sentence: what did the wife actually do to the new woman?

2. What does 笑里藏刀 mean, in your own words?

3. Which of this week's four characters can you write now without looking: 笑, 里, 藏, or 刀?

4. Think of someone warm to your face. Where was their hand the last time it mattered?

**Watch the hand, not the face — whose hand is it this week?**

看手，不看脸：这一周，那是谁的手？

Kàn shǒu bú kàn liǎn: zhè yì zhōu nà shì shéi de shǒu?