



平凡就是幸福——2005年12月31日加州洪水記

Ordinary Situations are a Blessing——

A Journal of a Flood in California on 12/31/2005

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寒假中，正是參禪的時間，先生從台灣來，在聖城小住幾天；因還有公務必需去看展及拜訪客人，加上姐姐極力邀約提前去她家住，所以我們就說好星期六去她家吃中飯。

那幾天都在下雨，雨好像也愈下愈大，沒有要停的樣子；所以星期六早上要出門前，孩子就在聽氣象報告，說哈卜蘭淹水。我就問：「是哈卜蘭哪裏淹水？」孩子說：「不知道，新聞只說哈卜蘭。」

我們一直在等雨小，等到快九點，想再不走，會趕不上吃中飯，就趕快上路。

出了山門，還開不到二分鐘，路邊就有告示牌寫著“FLOODED”(水災)；先生說：「沒關係，往前開！」怎知前面的路已被水淹沒，我們只好回頭走山門出來右轉往山上走的路；上山又下山，預備從柏金斯的路上高速公路。

下山，看到有一長排的車在路邊排隊，再往前看，告示牌寫“ROAD CLOSED”(前路關閉)，哇！這下怎麼上高速公路？就請孩子下車請教別人；那個人說，目前只柏金斯這條路還能走。我們假裝沒看見路邊的告示牌及大排長龍的車隊，跟著一些車走進被關閉的路；才一走進，就被眼前的景象嚇住，一輛汽車泡在水裏，大概有駕駛座高，另一輛小貨車也傾斜地泡在水裏，看不出裏面是否有人。這時，我沒辦法再假裝沒看到，停在原處，進退兩難；看到水的那一邊也排了一長龍的車隊，這時只有輪

Winter vacation was a good time to practice “Chan”. My husband had come from Taiwan and was staying at the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas(CTTB) for a few days. For business reasons, he had to attend exhibitions and visit customers. On top of that, my sister invited us to visit her. We agreed to have lunch at her home that Saturday.

It had been raining for a few days. It seemed to be getting heavier and showed no sign of stopping. Before we headed out to my sister's that Saturday morning, my son was listening to the weather report and learned that there was a flood in Hopland. I asked, “Where in Hopland is it flooding?” My son replied, “I don't know. The news only said Hopland.”

We were waiting for the rain to let up until about 9AM. We thought that if we didn't get on the road soon we wouldn't make it to lunch. So we headed out.

Not even a couple minutes into our journey out of CTTB, there was already a sign that said “FLOODED”. My husband said, “It's OK, keep driving!” Then we saw the road in front of us was indeed flooded, so we turned back and drove uphill on the road where you would make a right turn coming out of the CTTB's front gate. We would drive uphill and down planning to go through Perkins.

Going downhill we saw that traffic was all backed up. As we looked further ahead, we saw a sign that said “ROAD CLOSED”! Wow! How can we get on the highway? We asked our son to get out and ask. He was told that this road through Perkins was the only way. So we ignored the sign and the long line of cars on the roadside and followed some cars that had already forged ahead on a road that was supposedly closed. Just as we entered the “closed” road, we were horrified by the scene of a car floating in water at a level about the height of the driver's seat. Another small truck was





胎比較高的箱型車或小貨車，不斷的超過我們的車，從路的中間駛向對面，而對面的車和我們一樣在等待。

先生叫我跟著前面的箱型車走，我不敢；我說，除非有一輛像我這樣的車駛過，我才要過去。我們就在原地等，幾分鐘後，我看到一輛箱型車駛到對面後，停著和對面排在第一輛的駕駛交談，並比手劃腳一番後，那輛車開始駛向我們這一邊，對面的車隊慢速移動了；我看著幾輛和我類似的車都安全無事，就緊跟著一輛箱型車駛向對面。我很擔心，早在路不通時，我們就開始念觀世音菩薩聖號，現在心裏更是加緊念；好不容易過到對面，也上了高速公路，覺得好像逃過一個災難似的。

沒想到還開不到十分鐘，就被警察趕下高速公路；我們莫名其妙，101公路居然不能開？等停到路邊，看到有幾輛車的車主在交談，我們也去探聽消息；原來是因為淹水，所以101往南方向關閉。哇！我們怎麼辦？看天空，雨沒有要停的樣子，今天若不能去姐姐家，那明後天更不可能，總要好天氣水才有退的可能；若要回聖城，還要再涉一次水，我心有餘悸，所以我們決定往北走，接20號公路，再走5號公路，然後再接80號公路，可以去歐克蘭姐姐家。主意既定，就想是出來郊遊吧！把心放寬，跟先生說：「這下如你所願，之前說要出來走走，都被我回絕，說下雨哪兒都別去，就待在聖城。這會兒是補償你的，我負責開車，你們負責看風景。」

還沒開到5號公路，我們又被警察擋下，詢問去那裏；然後他把手一指，叫我們走旁邊的29號公路。我們想再多問一些，他就趕我們

half floating, but I couldn't tell if there was anybody in it. At this time, we couldn't pretend that everything would be OK. We stopped. Going either way would be difficult. I could see that the road in front, beyond the flooded area, had a long line of cars heading in our direction. Vehicles with large wheels like vans and trucks started to pass us by in the middle of the road. Traffic on the other side of the flooded area was waiting to get to this side, just like we were waiting to get to their side.

My husband asked me to follow the van in front of us. I wouldn't dare! I told him that only if a car similar to ours got through the flooded area would I try. We just waited there. A few minutes later, I saw a driver whose van had just passed the flooded area talking to the driver of the first car in the oncoming traffic. There were a lot of hand and leg gestures. Then that car started to drive in our direction. The car behind started to move in slowly, then a few cars similar to mine got through the flooded area without incident, so I just followed closely behind a van heading to cross the flooded area. I was worried. Early on when the road was blocked by the flood, we already started to recite Guan Shi Yin Bodhisattva's name. We were now reciting even more rigorously. It wasn't easy but we got to the other side, and we got on the highway as well. It felt like we just escaped a disaster.

I couldn't believe that it was not even ten minutes until we were ordered off the highway by the highway patrol. We were surprised that 101 was closed! Some folks were talking on the roadside. So we joined in trying to find out what the story was. It turned out that due to the flood, Southbound 101 was closed. Wow! What do we do now? The rain didn't look like it would stop. If we couldn't get to my sister's that day, the following days would not be possible for us. The flood would only subside if the weather was dry. If we headed back to CTTB, we would have to trek the flood one more time. I was still horrified by it. We decided to go north heading to highway 20, then interstate 5, and connect onto Highway 80. We could go to Sister Au Ka Lan's home. Once we made up our mind, we treated it like a vacation trip and were able to relax. I said to my husband, "This is what you wished for. You said you wanted to go out, but I rejected that idea because of the weather. This is your compensation. I am





走，因為後面已經跟著有一些車了；看他在這淒風苦雨中指揮，非常辛苦，我們只好趕快離開。

沿途孩子幫忙看地圖，卻看不出我們身在何處；前途茫茫，我們只好停下來加油及詢問商店的店員。他們很好心的將地圖拿出來，並指示我們繼續開；到了地圖盡處後再問人，因為他們的地圖沒有秀出我們要去的地方。

我們只好再上路，29號公路好像很長，似乎開不到盡頭；後來又進入山區，峰迴路轉，下山時天氣就好轉了，艷陽高照，我們有「終於有回到人間」的感覺。

來到一個小鎮，兩旁都是商店，這時已經十二點多了；我們就停車打電話給姐姐，告訴她目前的狀況，請她不用等我們吃飯。姐姐要我們趁著好天氣趕路，別休息了；我想也是，我們有看到往娜琶的指標，想應該離姐姐家不遠了，就再次上路。這次開不到半小時，我們就停下來了，因為前面沒有路了，只有看起來像似汪洋大海的水；路旁也是停滿了車，有的人在車上休息，更多的人圍著消防車救護人員詢問，或彼此交換意見。我們得到的消息是：若不再下雨，這水也要二三天才會退，現前只有128公路還通。我們有印象，從小鎮出來左轉這一段是29和128公路重覆的路段，右轉就是往128號公路；所以我們又回到小鎮，再次打電話給姐姐，並確定這個小鎮叫卡利司頭嘎。姐姐要我們考慮是不是住在這小鎮一晚？我說，真不行我會住下來；不過我們要先去吃飯，因為在我講電話的時間，先生已去一家中國餐館請他們煮幾樣素菜。我就自我解嘲說，我們真的是出來郊遊的。

吃飯前，我請教侍者，怎麼樣走128去柏克萊？並告知我們所處的境遇。他很熱心，拿出他們的地圖，告訴我們在什麼路口要左轉，什麼路口要右轉，

driving, you just enjoy the scenery.”

We hadn't reached Interstate 5 yet but were stopped again by the highway patrol. He asked where we were going, and then pointed us to detour to route 29. Before we could ask more questions he was already waving us through as there were many cars behind us. It's not an easy job directing traffic on such a cold and rainy day. So we just took off.

Along the way my son was checking the map but couldn't locate where we were. We stopped to get gas and asked for directions. Folks there were nice enough to take out their map and give us directions. Since their map did not cover much of the area we were going to, they told us to ask for directions again when we drove further.

We got on the road again. Route 29 seemed so long with no end to it! On one rustic stretch the road was really winding. As we were heading downhill on this road, the weather started to break and the sun pierced through. I felt like we were back to the world we used to know again.

We came to a small town. Both sides of the street were full of small shops. It was already past noon time as we stopped to make a phone call to my sister to let her know about our situation. I told her not to wait for us for lunch. She said that we should get going while the weather was good and not rest. I agreed. We saw signs pointing to Napa, meaning my sister's house shouldn't be far. So we got going again. We stopped again less than 30 minutes into our driving because we couldn't go any further - there was water everywhere like an ocean in front of us. Cars were all over the roadside. There were people resting in their cars. There was a flock of people surrounding some firemen at their fire engines asking questions and exchanging ideas. The news that we got was, even if the weather held up, it would be 2 to 3 days before the flood would subside. At that point, only route 128 was still open. Thus we drove back to the small town we just left and called my sister again. We learned that the small town is called Calistoga. My sister asked if we wanted to stay in Calistoga overnight and I said that I would if there was no other choice. But we had to go eat first, so while I was talking to her, my husband had found a Chinese restaurant and had already special ordered some vegetarian dishes. I just had to laugh - we were really vacationing!

Before the meal, we asked the waiter how to get to Berkeley from route 128, and we told him our situation. He enthusiastically took out a map and showed us the way to get to 101 and to our destination. While we were eating, the waiter came to show us the route to Santa Rosa through Napa and 101. He said it was a shorter distance and an easier drive.

After the meal, we decided to follow the route the waiter suggested. Since he was a local, we thought that his suggestion should be good. We got on the road and soon found that the road was going up along the hillside heading towards a higher altitude. Furthermore, there was continuous flow of traffic from both directions. With that we thought we would just be fine. We didn't get too far when we saw another sign





然後就可走到101高速公路，到我們要去的地方；吃飯中，侍者又告知：他們平常往散塔蘿莎走的路線，直走下去，也是可到娜琶，再轉101，比較近，也比較好走。

吃完飯，我們選擇侍者建議的路走，想他是當地人，他的建議應該可行；而且上路後，發現這條路沿著山走，地勢比較高，沿路來回車輛不斷，想這回應該是沒問題的。開了一段時間，又看到路邊有告示牌寫著“FLOOD”(水災)，路也開始下坡，我就開始擔心了；果然我們又被一片汪洋擋下，只好再回到小鎮，走最後一個希望之路--128公路。此時，我們深刻體會：什麼叫「走投無路」。

我們走的這一段128公路是山路，當看到路上的指示牌，我想完了，一定又是「水災」的告示；還好，告示牌寫的是「滑坡」。在山間小路行進中，曾有一部車打滑，衝到我的車道；還好他及時轉回，不然我們就會撞在一起。在那一瞬間，我喊了一聲「阿彌陀佛」！

終於我們上了高速公路，大家都鬆一口氣，也看到指標，再4哩就到散塔蘿莎，我們啞然失笑：從聖城到柏克萊聖寺，不塞車、正常開車速度，大概二個小時；而我們繞了一整天，居然還在離聖城一小時遠的地方。但總算知道身在何方，心就安了，先生和孩子開始呼呼大睡。

想姐姐應該在柏克萊聖寺，所以我們就去廟上，到時已是下午六點多了。一位佛友正在用電腦，她們已聽說我們的事，叫我去看哈卜蘭淹水的狀況；因她家住那兒，她的鄰居電郵照片給她，秀出101公路經過的哈卜蘭路段旁的商店，水深及膝。據說這是三十年來的第一次，難怪101公路關閉。

若是我們不出城，根本無法想像：這片土地，怎是如此的弱不禁風？這樣的雨，怎會造成那麼大的災害？也不會有種種的不便與心情的起起伏伏，更不能感受原來平凡就是幸福。我們當更加珍惜在聖城每天規律而看似平凡的幸福日子！

that said “FLOODED”. We started to worry. As expected, we were blocked by another flooded area. We had no choice but to turn back to Calistoga with one last hope in mind – Route 128. Now, “going nowhere” really takes on a special meaning in our hearts.

As we were driving through 128, we saw another sign. The first thought came to mind was, “it’s over”! It must be another “FLOOD”. It was actually a sign that said “SLIDE”; which was somewhat better than we thought. On this narrow and winding road, a vehicle coming from the opposite direction skidded across into our lane. Luckily, he regained control – just in time to prevent collision. Right at that moment, I exclaimed “Amitabha!”

We finally got on the highway. We could relax now. We were about 4 miles from Santa Rosa as indicated by the traffic signs. We were speechless! It would take about 2 hours to go from CTTB to Berkeley on a normal day. It had taken us almost a whole day just to reach half way. Well, at least we knew where we were. We were at peace! My husband and son began to fall asleep.

It was already past 6PM when we arrived at the monastery in Berkeley. I thought my sister would be there. A member of the monastery was on the computer and asked me to look at the Hopland flood reports. They already heard about our story. Her home is near Hopland. Her neighbor had just emailed her some pictures of the flood. Water was now knee-high, flooding the stores in Hopland along that stretch of Route 101. This was the first time that this had happened in 30 years! No wonder highway 101 was closed.

We couldn’t have imagined how devastating it was if we hadn’t been out there ourselves. Why is this world so fragile? How can these rains bring so much damage? Without such negative experiences, we wouldn’t realize that ordinary situations are such blessings! We should now cherish even more the daily disciplines that we follow each day in CTTB. The time here seems ordinary, but it is a very fulfilling and wonderful time!

