

GEORGE'S GUIDE TO SURVIVING THE RAINPOCALYPSE

by George Ding

Rule #1: Be wealthy.

Studies show that wealth is the greatest predictor of whether or not your house will collapse during a rainstorm. Wealth is also strongly correlated with the likelihood of owning an umbrella. Even if you end up in a life-threatening situation, people are more likely to try and save you. After all, no one wants a rich person's death on their conscience.

NOTE! This survival tip could take some time so start now!

If you're not rich, the next best insurance policy is the ability to swim. If you don't know how to swim, now might be a good time to enroll in a class or to jot down some quick notes for your executor.

In the event you find yourself carried away by a river of rainwater, the stroke you employ to escape it should depend on the speed of the current. If the river is flowing at a leisurely rate, work the breaststroke like an old Beijinger out for a morning dip. If the flash flood is more vigorous, try the backstroke – it's elegant and says, *Oh, this torrent of rainwater? Why, I hadn't even noticed.* If you're really struggling in the deluge, keep in mind the same rules apply to escaping a rapid river as to escaping a riptide: Flail around and scream until the lifeguard comes and saves you.

Of course, if the current is flowing in the direction of your house, flip onto your back with

your feet pointed downstream and think about how much money you just saved on cab fare.

If you're poor and you don't know how to swim, for the love of God stay inside a solid structure. That means no school buildings! Load up on instant noodles and bottled water and don't come out until you see the sun, which could take weeks. Quit your job if you have to.

TIP! If you live on the ground floor of an apartment building, invest in a canoe.

If you're in a car, breathe a sigh of relief: If worse comes to worst, you've got a place to sleep tonight. If you're stuck in endless traffic, cut the engine, turn on something soothing and laugh at all the poor bastards trudging home in the rain. When you get hungry, call McDonald's 24-hour delivery line and tell them the closest intersection and your license plate number.

If you absolutely must get home to feed some animal that can't fend for itself – like a Husky or a teenager – then do what you have to do. Drive on the shoulder, drive in the bike lane, barrel down the sidewalk. During the Rainpocalypse, anything goes.

DID YOU KNOW? If you have a car and no sense of shame, you can drive to the airport and charge people 800 yuan for a ride into the city.

If you approach a highway underpass that is completely flooded, gun it. If your car is going

fast enough – and I mean *Back to the Future* fast – the force of the car should be able to slice through the water. If that doesn't work, maybe you will have traveled back to a point in time before you tried something so stupid.

Should you fail to break the space-time continuum and find your vehicle fully submerged, do NOT use your head to break the car window – use a chisel or ice pick instead. If you don't have these things, call someone and tell them to buy one before coming to rescue you.

As the water slowly rises around you, don't be surprised if your life starts flashing before your eyes. Try to dwell on the good parts, if there are any. Make sure not to soil yourself until the water rises above your crotch. You never know who might be watching.

Unlock all the doors and wait for the car to fill completely with water. Then, when the car is entirely inundated, push open the door. If the driver's door is stuck, try the others. If they are all stuck, leave them unlocked – no sense in making it harder for first responders to fish you out.

If none of these scenarios apply to you, then I don't know what to say. Buy an umbrella!

Seriously though, if you find yourself on foot in the middle of the downpour and have to get home, start walking. You can spot an overflowing sewer because it looks like a weak geyser in an otherwise placid river. Avoid these, especially if you have any open wounds. When you get to a deep pond or river you can't ford, grab a long stick, strike it down at the water's edge and pray for a miracle. I hear it's worked before.