

Driving to Carmel, Monterey, Salinas, Yosemite National Park, and Lake Tahoe

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I successfully pursued a master's degree in linguistics at California State University at Long Beach while living with Mr. and Mrs. Bernhardt from April 1980 to December 1990 in Palos Verdes Estates, a suburb of Los Angeles, California. Mr. Bernhardt had worked for Northrop Corporation as an engineer and designed fighter jets and missiles. After he retired from Northrop at 65, he founded Aircon, a company which equipped and maintained both heaters and air conditioners for office buildings. Mrs. Bernhardt had graduated from the University of California at Berkley and they were proud of Mr. Bernhardt's high IQ (164) and Mrs. Bernhardt's higher education.

In May 1987, Mr. Bernhardt had a serious car accident. He ran a red light and another car hit him on the right side totaling his Ford Mustang. Fortunately, Mr. Bernhardt was not injured because the car was so sturdy. The Mustang had belonged to Mrs. Bernhardt but after she developed double vision, Mr. Bernhardt started driving it. I also drove the Mustang for going to the university and shopping.

Mr. Bernhardt was a perfectionist and he believed that he could never make a mistake and that his way to think, and to drive a car was the best way. He thought of himself as the best driver in the world; however, he had eight car accidents in eight years. For example, he scraped against a pickup truck, hit a parked car, and hit a motorcycle. Even though the traffic lights were red, he would enter the intersection, and he often missed stop signs. He ignored the speed limit and almost always drove faster. Many times he didn't step on the brake soon enough, so that he almost hit what was in front of his car. I was afraid of his driving and my heart beat quickly. Sometimes, I wanted to tell him to stop the car to let me out. It was no surprise when he totaled his car. The Mustang was very lovely and comfortable to drive so that Mr. and Mrs. Bernhardt and I deeply depended on it. After that accident, we missed driving the Mustang very much and Mr. Bernhardt kept it for three years in his backyard.

After Mr. Bernhardt totaled the Mustang, we didn't have any transportation for shopping or going to the university. This was a serious problem in southern California. Mr. Bernhardt was going to repair a Ford Torino which had been parked in his garage for four years. He asked one of his employees to repair it. The Torino had been driven more than 200,000 miles (320,000 km). It took three days to repair it. Even though the car was repaired, it was still in bad condition. Every time I pushed the brake pedal, the engine stalled, and it took some time to turn the engine back on. It was very dangerous to drive. I had enough money to buy a car but Mr. Bernhardt was against that idea. He believed that the Torino was good enough to drive. It was because he was proud of himself for driving

the American car more than 200,000 miles without changing its engine. He also was proud of himself for taking care of the car by himself.

The president of the Toyota Company in America, Mr. Togo, was one of our neighbors. I asked Mr. Togo to sell me a car directly from him instead of buying from a dealer and Mr. Togo agreed. My car was a 1987 metallic navy blue Toyota Tercel, an automatic with an air conditioner. Mr. Bernhardt gave me some advice to keep my car in good condition so I could drive the car for twenty years. First, don't drive over 55 miles (88 km) per hour until I had driven the car for 700 miles (1,120 km). Change the oil at 700 miles then change the oil every 1,000 miles (1,600 km). Use the same company's gasoline (Unical 76) and the same company's oil (SAD PENNZOIL). I accepted his advice to keep my car in good condition. After I had driven 700 miles, I changed the oil, the oil filter, and the air filter by myself. Mr. Bernhardt instructed me on how to do these things. Mr. and Mrs. Bernhardt were never pleased with my house work. Mr. Bernhardt always told me how much water and heat to use for cooking and how to do dishes. Moreover, he was never satisfied with my slow progress in school work; however, he was surprised at my mechanical skills. He told me, "Kyoko, you did a good job on the car. You learned how to take care of the car quickly. I enjoyed teaching you how to do things. You made me very happy."

After I had driven the Tercel more than 700 miles, I decided to go on a long drive by myself. On my way to Lake Tahoe, which is located on the border between California and Nevada, I was going to visit Carmel, Monterey, Salinas, and Yosemite because I had driven the 700 miles from Bryce Canyon National Park to Palos Verdes Estates by myself in 1986. When Mr. Bernhardt and I went to Zion National Park and Bryce Canyon National Park in Utah, we had taken turns driving. When we were coming back from Bryce Canyon, his eye condition turned bad and he couldn't drive anymore so that I drove 700 miles in one day by myself. From this experience, I was confident of my physical and mental strength for driving.

Before I started on the trip, I became a member of the American Automobile Association, Triple A. To be a member of Triple A, I paid 50 dollars a year. If something happened to my car, Triple A would help me; they would rescue me after running out of gasoline, they would tow my car, they would open locked doors, etc. I only had to call them for help. They also gave me road maps of individual states, the entire U.S.A., large cities, and area maps which showed several states together. What's more, they gave me guidebooks about individual states. I could make reservations for hotels and motels by using the guidebooks.

With a highlighter pen I marked the road to Lake Tahoe on the road map. I also wrote down the freeway numbers and road numbers on a piece of paper and tried to memorize them; where I should change freeways and what number freeway I should drive on.

I left Palos Verdes Estates at 5:40 A.M. on August 16. It was still dark. Admiring the magnificent million-dollar mansions along the Paseo Del Mar, I passed through it and then got on the Pacific Coast Highway. The Pacific Coast Highway changed its name to

Sepulveda Boulevard in Torrance. I next drove north on Interstate Highway 405, also called the San Diego Freeway. I had to change from the 405 Freeway to U.S. Highway 101, also called the Ventura Freeway. I had to watch the signs very carefully. After around one hour and thirty minutes of driving, I could change from the 405 Freeway to the 101 Freeway.

On the one hand, I really enjoyed driving the car. Nobody ordered me to do this or to do that. I could do anything I wanted to. If I changed my mind, I could go back to Palos Verdes at anytime. If I wanted to change my destination, I could do that, too. I didn't have to listen to anyone and I didn't have to talk. My mind was filled with freedom and was occupied only with thoughts about the trip. On the other hand, while I was driving on the freeway, I had to pay all my attention to the cars and the road signs around me without looking at any scenery.

I stopped in Santa Barbara to visit the Santa Barbara Mission. The mission was built in 1820 by the Spanish. I had heard that the mission was one of the most beautiful missions in California. Mr. Bernhardt told me that human arm bones were used for decorations in the Santa Barbara Mission. It was painted a light yellowish-pink and it didn't look so old. I saw the human arm bones above the door but I wasn't all that curious about them so I didn't take any pictures.

After driving 31 miles (50 km) from Santa Barbara, I was supposed to change from U.S. Highway 101 to California State Highway 1 which stretched to San Francisco. California State Highway 1 was located on the coast and it was said to be the most beautiful stretch of coastline in California. I stayed on the 101 Freeway and got off in Santa Maria to rest. I stopped at a Denny's Restaurant to drink a cup of coffee. Twelve miles from Santa Maria, the 101 Freeway and California State Highway 1 merged. I could see the ocean on my left. I wanted to take a picture of the ocean but I couldn't find any place to park my car. After a while, the merged highways again divided into California State Highway 1 and the 101 Freeway. Both of them went to San Francisco. California State Highway 1 was on the coast and the 101 Freeway was inland. I started driving on State Highway 1. While I was driving, I saw a huge round rock in front of me. I also saw a sign saying "Morro Bay." The rock looked like an island. The state highway was only a two-lane highway and the traffic was pretty heavy. Even though I wanted to take a picture, I couldn't find any place to stop and park my car. I was sorry that I couldn't take any pictures at Morro Bay. After I passed there, the highway became narrower and curved a lot. There were some beaches beside California State Highway 1 but mostly there were just cliffs. The traffic was pretty busy. There were occasional parking spaces for two or three cars beside the highway; therefore, I could take some pictures of the ocean views. The ocean views were not clear because it was misty. Both the sky and the ocean were gray. Most of the brown and gray cliffs were covered with mist. California State Highway 1 was not as beautiful as I had expected. I thought that the coastline in Palos Verdes Estates was more beautiful than that of California State Highway 1.

Before I reached Carmel, the traffic became so heavy that I couldn't drive smoothly

anymore. Many cars were turning off to the left. I was curious about why they were going there, so I followed them. I saw a mission in front of me which looked older than the one in Santa Barbara. I entered the mission and found many people there. One of the ladies described the mission and told me that Pope John Paul II would come later that year so the ladies were sewing special clothes for him. She said, "We are not sure whether the Pope will wear the clothes."

I had a reservation at a motel in Carmel. As I had paid around 85 dollars a night, I expected that the motel would be nice. I drove for a while in Carmel to find my motel. I couldn't find any street names because there were no street signs. I wondered how I could find my motel without knowing the direction. While I was stopped at a red light, I was looking at the pedestrians. At the corner on the sidewalk, I saw a white pole which was around 1.5 feet (50 cm) in height. I saw letters on the four sides of the pole. That's how they marked the street names. Finally, I could find my motel. It was 4:15 P.M. and I had driven 362 miles (580 km) from Palos Verdes Estates to Carmel. It had taken me 10 hours 35 minutes. So far so good. The motel wasn't good for the price. As the motel had neither a telephone in my room nor a parking lot, I had to use a public telephone and park my car on the street which was 500 yards (450 m) away from the motel because a parking place on the street near the motel was parked full.

Carmel Beach is famous for its beauty so I walked up to the beach. I didn't have to find the sign for the beach because many people were heading there and many people were coming back. I followed the crowd. It took around 15 minutes on foot to the beach. Why did people admire this beach? It was smaller than I had expected and it was not so different from others; however, there were some pine trees on the beach.

The next morning, I was going to drive on Seventeen-Mile Drive, a scenic route. I was going to see Lone Cypress and Pebble Beach along Seventeen-Mile Drive. I had only ever seen these places in pictures. I drove along the same road several times to find the entrance to Seventeen-Mile Drive. At last I found a small sign for the Drive. The road entered a residential area. I thought I must have missed the road again. The scenic route shouldn't be in a residential area. I returned to the entrance where I had seen the sign for Seventeen-Mile Drive. I wanted to ask someone which way I should drive to reach the scenic route but nobody passed by. Anyway, I continued to drive, looking for the scenic route. While I was driving, I saw a golf course on my left. Nobody was playing golf there. I parked my car near the beach. There were many rocks in the ocean. The sky was gray and so was the ocean. Waves hit the rocks and the waves were broken into many white bubbles. I started driving in the opposite direction. While I was driving, I saw a cypress tree which was very familiar to me. As I drove up to it, I realized that I had seen the cypress tree in a picture. It was the Lone Cypress Tree. I was driving on Seventeen-Mile Drive after all. The golf course must be the very famous Pebble Beach Golf Course. From Seventeen-Mile Drive, I headed for Salinas which is famous for John Steinbeck.

When I had read Steinbeck's Cannery Row and Tortilla Flat, I had thought that

Monterey must be a very simple and quiet fisherman's village. In July 1985, I had gone to Monterey from San Francisco by bus. I saw a beautiful beach, a small harbor, and a lot of tourists in Monterey. There were free tourist buses there. I couldn't understand why Monterey attracted so many people; however, it was a very famous place because of Steinbeck. I couldn't imagine that the Monterey in the novels and the Monterey that I visited were the same. I asked some people if I were in the right place. Monterey had changed to a tourist town instead of a peaceful fisherman's village. I was thinking about Monterey while I was driving on Seventeen-Mile Drive. To go to Salinas, I had to drive through Monterey.

I saw many people walking in Monterey as I did in 1985. I also saw the names of "Cannery Row" and "Monterey Canning Company" on buildings. After I passed through Monterey, I looked for a freeway entrance to State Highway 68, which would go to Salinas. While I was driving, I realized that the scenery around me was very familiar. Then I saw the sign for Fort Ord. I had passed there on the way to Monterey from San Francisco in 1985. I had missed the entrance for the 68 and I had to find another entrance for State Highway 183, which went to Salinas, too. I stopped my car a couple of times and asked how to get on the 183. Even though I asked some people, I couldn't find the entrance easily. Finally, I did find it behind the main street. After I got on the 183, I didn't have to think about anything. The end of State Highway 183 was Salinas and the highway merged with the 101 Freeway there.

While I was driving on State Highway 183, I enjoyed seeing the scenery around the highway. I could see only vegetable fields. The fields reached to the horizon. Lines of yellow or green vegetables stretched to the horizon. I saw neither houses nor men in the field. The scenery reminded me of the movie East of Eden.

I got off the 183 in Salinas, a small town. I expected everybody would know Steinbeck's house. I asked a man getting into a pickup truck in front of a store about how to get to Steinbeck's house. He replied that he didn't know about Steinbeck's house because he didn't live in Salinas. I entered the store and asked the storekeeper how to get to Steinbeck's house.

Steinbeck's house was larger than I had expected; however, the area didn't look wealthy. Steinbeck's house was fancier than the other houses in the area. It was a two-storied wooden house and was painted beige. Only a large sign saying "Steinbeck House" showed that it was special. I took a picture of it as a souvenir and I went to the John Steinbeck Library in Salinas. I didn't see any special things in the library except the name of the library and John Steinbeck's statue in front of the library. I didn't see any special things in Salinas except the Steinbeck house, the John Steinbeck Library, and the vegetable fields around Salinas, but I was satisfied that I had visited Salinas which had been so important to Steinbeck.

From Salinas, I got on U.S. Highway 101 and headed for Yosemite National Park. To go to Yosemite, I had to change from the 101 Freeway to State Highway 156. The first

entrance to the 156 went to Monterey so that I had to watch the road signs very carefully. I also had to watch the road signs for whether the sign said "Highway 156 north" or "Highway 156 east." I was able to get on to the 156 without any problems. According to the road map, State Highway 156 and State Highway 25 overlapped in Hollister. I parked my car in front of a fruit store and asked the store owner about the road sign in Hollister. "Does the road sign say 'Highway 156 north?'" The store owner said, "You only have to stay on Highway 156." The store owner was correct. Even though I didn't see any signs for State Highway 156, I was driving on it. While I was driving on the 156, I saw a beautiful lake. I wanted to stop the car and take a picture but my mind was so busy thinking about Yosemite National Park. I changed from the 156 to State Highway 59. In Merced, I changed from the 59 to State Highway 140. After I got on the 140, I felt very familiar with the scenery because I had seen the scenery in 1982 from the bus. I saw many almond trees and yellow fields. The yellow fields reminded me of the painting The World of Christina by Wyeth. The yellow fields changed to yellow hills. I passed more yellow fields and hills. I started driving beside a river. Yosemite National Park must be near here. I expected that I would pass through Wawona Tunnel soon but actually I was driving along the Yosemite Valley floor without passing through the tunnel. When I arrived at Curry Village, it was 3:00 P.M. I had driven 263 miles (421 km) in eight hours.

I drove into Yosemite Village. I could park my car anywhere and could take many pictures. El Capitan stretched vertically into the sky. I could take pictures of El Capitan from very close to it. I could see El Capitan from different positions that I hadn't been able to in 1982. I could also see Half Dome from different angles. Both El Capitan and Half Dome were as beautiful as in 1982. I wanted to see the entire valley from Wawona Tunnel. In front of the tunnel, I saw the beautiful view again. There were El Capitan on the left side, Cathedral Rocks on the right side, and Half Dome in the center. The valley floor was thickly covered with evergreen trees. The view was almost the same as when I had seen it in 1982. My mind became very peaceful with the beautiful view but there was no water in the view. When I had seen the view in 1982, there had been a waterfall on the right side called Bridalveil Fall. I drove near to the waterfall. There was a little water as if it were a very thin lace veil but it was almost disappearing due to the wind.

I wanted to stay in Yosemite longer but I had to go to Lake Tahoe. I had a reservation at the Blue Lake Motel in South Lake Tahoe. I thought that it would take two hours from Yosemite to Lake Tahoe. I left Yosemite at 4:00 P.M. and headed for Lake Tahoe. U.S. Highway 395 was next to Yosemite Valley. I expected that I would reach U.S. Highway 395 soon. Even though I had left Yosemite Valley, I enjoyed looking at the beautiful scenery: very tall fir trees, huge gray mountains without any trees, and a blue lake. Sometimes I saw huge clouds of white smoke in the woods. I thought that it must be a forest fire. Someone should have called a fire station. I looked for a telephone but I couldn't find any. Two or three cars were parked and some people were looking at the smoke. I wanted to ask them to go to Yosemite Valley and report the fire. I didn't have time to return to the valley

because I had to reach Lake Tahoe before dark. I thought that I might meet a police car while I was driving. If I did, I would tell them about the fire.

I drove up hills, through meadows, and beside cliffs. It took longer to drive than I had calculated by looking at the map. Even though I had driven for one hour, I still couldn't reach U.S. Highway 395. I thought that I had entered the wrong road. According to the road map, the 395 was running beside Yosemite. I looked for a road sign to find out the number of the road on which I was driving but I felt uneasy. There were a few cars around me and I caught sight of a park ranger's car. I asked the park ranger if I were on the correct road. He said that I was on the right road and was still in Yosemite National Park. I didn't know that Yosemite Park was so large. It took at least two hours to cross the park. I had thought that Yosemite Valley was the whole of Yosemite National Park. Finally, I could reach the 395. It would take one hour from the junction between State Highway 120 and U.S. Highway 395 to Lake Tahoe. I was one hour behind my schedule.

I saw a lake which was shining like gold. What a beautiful lake it was! It must have been a reservoir. I didn't have time to stop and take a picture. I had to go to Lake Tahoe in a hurry. U.S. Highway 395 was located at a high elevation. Even though I stepped on the accelerator very hard, my speed was only around 40 miles (64 km) per hour. My car engine was too small to climb the high hills at high speed.

I was further behind my schedule than I expected. I had to change from U.S. Highway 395 to State Highway 89. It was getting dark so I turned on the car lights. After I got on the 89, I could not see any cars, any lights, any houses, or any road signs around me. Of course there was no public telephone along the road. I thought, "If something happened to me, how many days would I wait for help? I might wait for days or a week, even." The sun set in the mountains. The mountains were completely dark and the sky above the mountains turned orange. It was absolutely gorgeous. I stopped in the middle of the road and took a picture. Then I started driving again. There were some lights in front of me. I must have arrived at Lake Tahoe. I drove for a while in a wooded area but couldn't find my motel. I stopped my car and asked some people which way I should go to my motel. According to them, I had to drive the opposite way. At 9:15 P.M., I finally arrived at the motel. I had driven 202 miles (323 km) from Yosemite Village. It had taken me 5 hours and 15 minutes which was three hours longer than I had expected. The motel clerk gave me a key for room number four. I didn't like the number four because in Japan, number four is an unlucky number. The pronunciation of "four" and the pronunciation of "death" are the same in Japanese. I asked the clerk to change the room. He showed me a very unhappy face but he gave me a different room key.

The next morning, I got up early to drive around the lake. I drove on State Highway 89, also named the Emerald Bay Road. After I passed the city of South Lake Tahoe, I could see many tall fir trees around me. The highway was climbing up. Among the trees, I saw a dark blue lake on my left. It must be Emerald Bay. Mr. and Mrs. Bernhardt told me to be sure not to miss seeing it. The bay was small and it was not as beautiful as

Mr. and Mrs. Bernhardt had told me. I drove up further and I found the blue lake among tall fir trees on my right. The lake was very calm and it was surrounded by many fir trees. When I drove up a little, I saw a small island in the lake among the trees. The color of the lake changed from light blue to dark blue. It must be Emerald Bay because Mr. and Mrs. Bernhardt had mentioned the island in the bay. When I drove up the hill, I could see the whole bay. It was surrounded by hills covered with a lot of evergreen trees. Those lit by the sun were shining light yellow-green and those in shade were dark green. The hills on the west side were shining light green and light yellow in the sunlight but those on the east side were dark green. The east side of the hills reflected their shapes on the lake which was as calm as if it were a mirror. Nobody was around me. I enjoyed looking at the splendid and peaceful view for a while. I realized that there was a trail to the shore of the bay and that I had started walking on the trail alone. Along the trail, clean water was running but there was a warning which said, "Don't drink the water." The color of the lake changed to white, gray, light blue, and sapphire blue according to my position on the trail. In the middle of the trail, I saw a man walking toward me. He said, "Good morning. You are the first person I have met today. I caught some fish. My son is working at Emerald Bay as a park ranger." I replied to him, "Good morning. The lake is beautiful. I'm glad to come here." He said, "It is the most beautiful time now."

When I reached the shore, the lake was silver gray and some parts were slightly yellow. The sky and the lake were the same color. As the lake was calm, the island and hills were reflected on the lake. I could see a small house on the island. I thought that the house on the island ruined the view of the island. I saw a small wooden house on the shore. I expected that it was a restroom. The toilet was not a flush toilet. There was no water even to wash my hands.

I started driving on State Highway 89 again to drive around the lake. I stopped the car in Homewood to eat lunch. Sometimes Mr. and Mrs. Bernhardt told me about a cottage in Homewood. Mr. and Mrs. Bernhardt had had an American Field Service exchange student, York, from Germany in 1958. They took York's parents to stay in the cottage in Homewood for a while. Mr. Bernhardt insisted that I should stay in the same cottage but I refused. I couldn't afford to stay there. I made a reservation for the cheapest motel around Tahoe. It was in South Lake Tahoe. It made Mr. Bernhardt very upset because only gamblers stayed in South Lake Tahoe. In Homewood, there was a small airplane tour. I wanted to see Emerald Bay from the sky but I didn't have any extra money to pay for the tour.

It was so enjoyable driving my car. I saw a beautiful blue lake and a lot of tall green fir trees from my car. After I drove through such towns as Tahoe City, Lake Forest, Cedar Flat, Agate Bay, and Kings Beach, I entered Brockway. Brockway was in California. The city next to Brockway was Crystal Bay. Brockway and Crystal Bay touched each other but there was a big difference between them. As soon as I entered Crystal Bay, I realized that Crystal Bay was in Nevada because I saw some casinos in Crystal Bay. Gambling is legal in Nevada. There was a lot of greenery on the Nevada side of the lake, too. In the

wooded area, I saw a wagon. The words "Ponderosa Ranch" was painted on the canvas cover of the wagon. I also saw a house on the hill. I read "Ponderosa, Home of Bonanza" on the house wall. When I was a teenager, I used to watch Bonanza on TV and the programs were shot there. I paid ten dollars and entered the ranch. There was a western-style small town on the ranch. Gift stores, bars, and restaurants were in the town. At the end of the town, there was a house where the Cartwright family used to live in the program. Inside the house, there were some pieces of furniture and pictures of TV stars who had acted in the program. I wasn't impressed so much by the ranch. I gambled on a slot machine at the bar but I didn't make any money.

I started driving around the lake again. The lake and its shore were beautiful. Every time I took pictures, I thought that I could use them as post cards.

I decided to make some money while I was in Nevada. I entered one of the casinos. I exchanged a twenty-dollar bill for one-dollar coins and put them into the slot machine. It took only five minutes to spend all twenty dollars. I exchanged another twenty-dollar bill for one-dollar coins again. I spent all of them in five minutes. I couldn't afford forty dollars. I had to make back at least the forty dollars which I had lost. I spent twenty dollars again. I shouldn't have spent all the money from my wallet. I remembered that there were some twenty-five cent coins in my car. I kept them for crossing Vincent Thomas Bridge when I went to and came home from the university. There were around ten dollars worth of coins. I spent them in less than five minutes. I didn't have any more money for gambling.

I arrived in South Lake Tahoe. I wanted to see Emerald Bay again before I returned to the motel. While I was driving up the Emerald Bay Road, I realized that all the trees were light yellow green. The lake was blue. The view in the morning was far better than that in the late afternoon. I returned to the motel. I had driven 153 miles (245 km) around the lake that day.

I left South Lake Tahoe at 5:10 A.M. I drove on U.S. Highway 50 and headed for Carson City. After I passed a junction between State Highways 28 and U.S. Highway 50, I could see many bright lights from the highway in the far distance. The area with the lights must be Carson City because there were many casinos there. After I started driving on U.S. Highway 395 south, it started getting a little lighter. The sun was still behind the mountains but the sky above the mountains had turned slightly golden yellow. A little later, the sun appeared over the mountain and it lit up a field. The field changed its color from completely black to yellow brown. The mountains were slightly purple. It was a beautiful and magnificent countryside. There were no cars around me. I didn't see any houses beside the 395. What a wonderful drive it was! I was going to go to Yosemite National Park again. It was easier to drive on the 395 southbound because I didn't have to climb hills and mountains. I thought that I could drive faster from Lake Tahoe to Yosemite than from Yosemite to Lake Tahoe because I wouldn't have to climb hills and mountains.

After I had driven around 60 miles on U.S. Highway 395, I saw a golden-yellow lake on

my left. It was Mono Lake. The lake was calm and reflected the morning sun. Part of the lake was golden and part of the lake was aqua-blue. Sometimes the whole lake turned gray. Its color changed according to my location. The mountains and hills around the lake were light purple. On the one hand, I wanted to drive close to the lake but on the other hand, my mind was occupied with Yosemite. I was anxious to arrive at Yosemite Park; therefore, I didn't go near Mono Lake. I only drove beside the lake. I thought that someday I would come to see Mono Lake again.

I changed from U.S. Highway 395 to State Highway 120 which would run through Yosemite National Park. While I was driving on the 120, I could enjoy the scenery around me. The scenery was different from what I had seen the previous day. Some parts of the mountains and hills were lit by the morning sun but some valleys were covered with fog or mist. I drove to Wawona Tunnel. The view of Yosemite Valley from the tunnel was not clear because the valley was covered with fog. I drove into the valley and arrived at Camp Curry at 10:20 A.M. I had driven 208 miles (333 km) from Lake Tahoe in 5 hours and 10 minutes. I thought that driving from Lake Tahoe to Yosemite would be faster than driving from Yosemite to Lake Tahoe but it was only five minutes different.

I drove in the valley for a while and enjoyed looking at Half Dome, El Capitan, and the meadows. I drove to Wawona Tunnel again. The valley was still covered with fog. I decided to drive up to Glacier Point. While I was driving in the wooded area to Glacier Point, I saw that some trees were burning. The flames were about 20 inches (50 cm) high and white smoke came out of the wooded area. This time I didn't panic because I knew why firefighters or park rangers didn't put out the fire. When I came to Yosemite the first time in 1982, I learned that the fire had been under control and if it was caused naturally, they don't put it out. I didn't remember that three days ago.

From the top of Glacier Point, I could see the same view as in 1982. A river flowed through the valley. There were meadows and wooded areas. A road ran through the meadows. I saw Half Dome in front of me. I also saw El Capitan. Only one thing was different from the view in 1982: there was no Yosemite Fall in the view. Someone pointed out a fall which was quite close to Half Dome. It was Nevada Fall. I drove to Wawona Tunnel again. This time I could see the valley clearly. El Capitan, Half Dome, Cathedral Rocks, and the thick green fir tree carpet were bright in the sun as if they were proud of their beauty. I stayed in front of the tunnel for a while and looked at the view. While I was in Yosemite Valley, I drove 66 miles (106 km).

I didn't want to leave Yosemite but I forced myself to do so at 3:00 P.M. I had to go home to Palos Verdes. I drove on State Highway 41 which ran through a wooded area. In Fresno, I changed from the 41 to State Highway 99. I drove on the 99 for around 60 miles (96 km) and reached Bakersfield. Around 25 miles (40 km) after Bakersfield, I entered Interstate Highway 5. After I drove around 50 miles (80 km), I entered Interstate Highway 405. Palos Verdes was near there. I arrived at home at 10:15 P.M. From Yosemite to Palos Verdes Estates, I had driven 330 miles (528 km). It took me 7 hours 15 minutes. On

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this trip, I drove 1377 miles (2203 km) by myself. I really enjoyed this trip.