

Black Friday

Karen in America

By Karen Zhang

你知道“黑色星期五”吗？在我们对西方文化的理解中，“黑色星期五”源于其宗教信仰，正如圣经中记载的，亚当与夏娃在一个星期五偷吃了禁果，二人又死于星期五；耶稣在一个星期五被出卖钉死在十字架上。而数字“13”也是一个非常不吉利的数字，圣经中提到出卖耶稣的叛徒犹大是最后的晚餐中的第13个客人。因此，当每月的13日恰逢星期五的话，人们往往认为这是一个非常不吉利的日子，将它称为“黑色星期五”。

可是，这次Karen给我们讲的并不是我们印象中的“黑色星期五”，而是每年感恩节后（美国的感恩节是每年十一月的最后一个星期四）的星期五，各大商场疯狂打折，广大市民疯狂抢购，整个一片疯狂、激烈、混乱的局面。下面我们就随着Karen一起来见识一下这不可思议的“黑色星期五”吧！

“Do you know what Black Friday is?” my American friend asked me.

“No,” I said. “Isn’t it an unlucky day that is on Friday, the 13th?” I thought the color black was usually associated with misfortune.

“No, no,” my friend explained. “It’s the Friday following Thanksgiving Day. Stores usually give the biggest discounts [折扣] of the year from the early morning of that day.”

Thanksgiving Day in the U.S. always falls on the fourth Thursday in November.

I showed an “oh, I see” expression and didn’t give much thought to it. I thought it was just like in China when discounts were everywhere before Chinese New Year. That is, until I watched a clip [片断] of TV news after the last Black Friday; it showed people being trampled [踩踏] and hurt at a store entrance in Buffalo, N.Y., on the morning of Black Friday. I was shocked and in disbelief [不相信]. How come such frenzy [疯狂] was happening in America where consumption goods are abundant?

I often thought only people in poverty or living at war would risk their lives for cheap provisions. For instance, the TV news showed

Afghan refugees [难民] looting [洗劫] shops and the Indian populace [民众, 老百姓] charging into a salvation [救助] camp for medicines and water. I cannot imagine such uncivilized madness repeated in the U.S.. Yes, just to buy a half-priced iPad for US\$399, for instance—and many other good bargains [特价商品]—Americans are willing to stand the winter chill [寒冷], sitting outside the stores all night long to be the first customers when the doors open at 5 am. I marveled [惊讶] at their stamina [耐力].

Traditionally, Black Friday kicks off the Christmas shopping season. I am told that Christmas sales in America make up between one third and half of the annual sale of the businesses. But due to the slow economy in the country, merchants can’t wait to start the

seasonal promotion a month early. I remember by early November last year, I had seen Christmas decorations in the shopping malls and Christmas carols [颂歌] being sung. Whether it’s Black Friday or not, shopping seems to play an important role in the American way of living. So it doesn’t make any difference to me if I miss the big sales on Black Friday, does it? ①

