

I had a nice calm day planned for Sunday. I'd go downtown, visit the Denver Botanic Garden, maybe swing by Union Station and then head home to get some overdue picture and blog posting done.

That was the plan.



*Temple Bells somewhat randomly present in the Denver Botanic Garden.*

The gardens were lovely and I had a great time wandering around, taking a million pictures (almost none of which came out; pretty much my normal), having a snack, and enjoying the morning.





*I'm a huge fan of these crazy Victoria Platters. The water looks a bit strange because the folks who run this place add black die both to make it look cool and reduce fungal growth.*



*The meadow was one of my favorite parts.*

## Sunday Stranding



*The garden is nestled in nearish to downtown. I liked seeing the buildings rise around us.*



*Oh, some of my favorite Dr. Seuss plants!*

A lovely morning and still time in early afternoon to check out Union Station.



*Union Station is cool.*



*Enhanced sign. ACME warehouse. Parking lot where I locked the keys of my scooter into my scooter's top case.*

Ah, that invigorating moment when you stride up to your scooter and reach down to find an empty pocket where your keys should be. No worries! I have a spare key! Stashed in my jacket which I usually take with me and this time I locked in the top case.

Dangit.

So I called Progressive Roadside Assistance. They were cheerful and incompetent. It took over an hour and multiple calls before they finally figured out they didn't have my proper scooter in the system so they'd just keyed in some other random bike. The locksmith



eventually called me directly and said, "I have no idea if they're going to authorize me to come out or not, do you want me to head your way and you pay for it if they don't?" "YES".

The locksmiths (one arrived but soon called for support) were cheerful, much more competent and very dismayed that I had a high security key. That means no easy way to pick the lock, although they both tried. Then they tried a variety of ways to slide a bar in and open the latch, but the top case is really well designed to foil such attempts! Lucky me. Finally I suggested we just pry the case open enough to get my jacket out and, sure enough, we got the spare key out. They did a good job of using air pads (think little inflatable pillows) to keep any potential damage to a minimum, and since then the top case hasn't shown any signs of abuse. Fortunately I'd also left the original key in my motorcycle pants (also locked in the top case, it was quite full which made opening it more fun) which is actually good news. If I'd lost it downtown a new one is a few hundred dollars (they have a chip in them to make taking the scooter harder - at this point I'm feeling it's pretty secure).

Sometime amidst all the calling, my parking expired and I was also issued a parking ticket. Those folks are crafty, they snuck in there and put the ticket on my windshield while I was probably 20' away, although I often had my back to the bike while I was calling Progressive again and again and again.

Many hours and dollars later, feeling fully embarrassed about being a total idiot, I was on my way. Summary: Progressive Roadside Assistance is possibly better than nothing, although in this case was actually much worse than nothing. Theoretically I can get reimbursed if I can get the address from their voicemail (they don't post it online of course) and jump through all the hoops which is really easy to do while on the road and not having things like envelopes, etc. Interested in getting roadside assistance? Go with another option.

Pop-A-Lock in Denver, on the other hand, I have no trouble recommending. I hope you (and

I) never need them, but they were cheerful, came up with various different approaches to solve the problem and kept the original quote even though it took them much longer to get things sorted than they originally hoped.

I did end up getting home and wandering out to the Schoolhouse, which is a fun bar in Arvada with fixtures and accessories taken from old schools. Kevin and Robin and told me about it, another good recommendation. The bar is made of pencils, the menus looked like track announcements, etc. They also had a long bar with a massive shelf behind it full of whisky. So much delightful whisky. I tried a few local whiskies and had a delightful evening. The bar conversation in Denver is of much higher caliber than, say, Wall, South Dakota.



## Sunday Stranding

*In closing: a picture of my two Denver fuzzy work companions. Seen here attempting to sleep on my pillow, something cats do when they know you're allergic to them.*