



## Mercury in Retrograde

### Description



As fellow RVers and travelers know, traveling is not

always perfect. Things go wrong and plans don't always work out.

So although our trip across Baja was amazing, we encountered a number of mishaps while on this journey. I always say that problems tend to come in threes, but we had quite a few more than three so we've written it off to Mercury in retrograde.

**#1** Somewhere down in Baja California Sur, the tow car turn signals, brake lights and emergency lights stopped working when it was hooked up to the RV. A pretty minor issue although it was not entirely safe and made us technically illegal as we drove around. And we couldn't find any RV repair place to



Hector visited a bunch of auto and boat repair places and

mostly got blank looks until someone referred him to a motorcycle mechanic of all things. The guys at Motos Chepe in La Paz were totally game and together with Hector diagnosed the problem.

One of the cables that ran under the motor had broken and they repaired it. Thanks



**#2** The check engine light on the RV lit up right as we

entered our RV park in La Paz, 900 miles from the border. YIKES. Fortunately La Paz has one of the only authorized Sprinter service facilities in all of Baja (plus Cabo and Tijuana). We took the coach in and the engine code was diagnosed as low pressure at the fuel injection rail.

After the first “fix” we headed back north and as we approached Loreto the check engine light came on again. We made a decision to drive 320 miles down to Cabo to the main Sprinter shop.

The second “fix” lasted almost all the way back to La Paz and then the check engine light came on again. Valuable advice from our friend Michael in San Diego helped us avoid replacing a fuel pump that would have taken over a week to get imported. Dirty diesel, common in Baja California, had clogged our fuel filter and we replaced it instead. Solved!

The process involved four days, two overnights at two different sprinter shops, missing a blue whale outing, and a 640 mile detour. Not to mention the stress of driving all those miles with the check engine light on hoping not to get stuck in the middle of the road.





**#3** We had a “smash and grab” incident while our car was parked during a night out to dinner. This type of incident can happen in any big city or town, and in no way do we want anyone to see it as a reflection of Baja or Mexico. But though we are normally more careful, we’d gotten pretty relaxed at this point of our trip, and had items sitting in plain sight in the back seat. And we parked on a lonely street.

The next morning, Hector created a temporary waterproof cover for the window. And we lucked out that the thief stole relatively inexpensive stuff – a couple of new masks and snorkels and old fins that we had loaded in the car in preparation for snorkeling the next morning, a cooler and two old bicycle helmets. But they missed an expensive camera lens and binoculars that were not visible. It could have been much worse.

One more note – the police were great. They gave us a moment to process and to check what was missing. When we told them what was taken, they sent a patrol car to look around the area.

They also pulled film from a nearby camera which showed the guy breaking the window and taking the stuff but it was too dark to make him out clearly. But the video also had a time stamp which was just

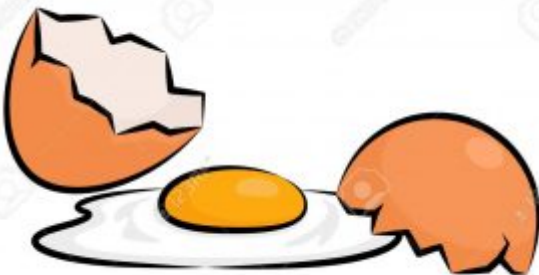


#4 That same night – just as we were driving back to the

RV, I got a text from our fabulous next door neighbor, Betty, that we had a huge puddle forming on the side of our barn in Albuquerque. What?!!! A pipe that had busted in the beginning of winter had apparently busted again.

Betty graciously offered to let plumbers from the plumbing company that had previously worked on the problem into the house. This time they found the real culprit and fixed it. And it was under warranty. Score!

#5 A funny one – on our way back north after the check engine light saga, we hit a bad section of road with lots of bumps. In Mexico, eggs don't have to be refrigerated, and we kept our eggs in a basket along with other foods on top of the bunk above the cab. The bins are usually too heavy to move but round.



Of course it was the one with a large egg carton and 23

eggs came crashing down. Fortunately, they



floor and

lost one of his cameras. We're not quite sure what happened. We called and went back to a couple of places where he might have left it but nothing.

Fortunately, this was his oldest camera and we'd just been talking about the fact that it was near its end (digital cameras have a finite number of "clicks" and he had far surpassed that) and his oldest lens. Someone in our house just might be getting a new camera.

The crazy thing is all of this happened in a period of two and a half weeks. Mercury in retrograde. bumps.



But these bumps in the road were only a small part of our

two-months of spectacularly beautiful places, lovely people, yummy food, kayaking to our hearts delight, "petting" gray whales and fun Carnival celebrations in a beautiful city.

And once we solved the check engine issue there was more fun to come on our drive north!

## Category

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## Tags

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