

AUTO-QUAKE

by

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EXT. TOM'S HOUSE - DAY

A modest house with a very high-class car in the driveway sits next to a modest subcompact.

INT. TOM'S HOUSE - DAY

KNOCK, KNOCK.

TOM walks across his living room to the door, and opens it.

JIM

Hey, Tom.

TOM

Jim. Welcome. Come in.

JIM

Thanks.

Jim walks in and Tom closes the door behind him. Tom walks into the kitchen.

TOM

I just need to grab my wallet and stuff. You excited?

JIM

About the game? Sure. I haven't been to a baseball game in awhile. Kendra liked to go, and ever since she broke up with me...

Tom pockets his wallet and keys.

TOM

Yes, your moping is well known. You mind not mentioning that today?

JIM

Sure. Sorry.

TOM

And stop apologizing. It's nothing.

JIM

Yes. I don't look it, but I am actually excited. A little nervous, 'cause what if she's there?

TOM

Oh Lord, give it a rest. If she is there, who cares?

JIM

It would be weird.

TOM

Then we won't sit with her. Come on, I got my new ride out here. We'll have Kendra replaced before the day is out.

JIM

I saw your new ride out there.

TOM

What do you think?

JIM

I'm impressed. Who'd you steal it from?

TOM

Nobody.

JIM

Are we ready?

TOM

Let's go.

They walk out the door, and Tom closes the door behind them.

EXT. BASEBALL GAME - DAY

Stock footage of a baseball game.

EXT. PARKING LOT - DAY

Tom and Jim walk through the lot between the sitting cars.

JIM

Good game. Thanks for taking me.

TOM

No problem dude. Now, it's time  
to cruise and-

Tom freezes. His eyes are wide open.

TOM

Oh, no.

JIM

Where's the car?

TOM

Oh, dear God no!

JIM

Maybe it's parked somewhere else.

TOM

No, man, I parked it right here.  
I remember that truck and that  
car, and-

Tom looks dumbfounded. He looks at Jim.

TOM

Somebody stole my car!

Suddenly, the ground lurches beneath them. They fall to the ground.

INSERT NEWS REPORT

A NEWS ANCHOR sits behind a desk coldly reporting. His broadcast is interspersed with footage of the earthquake and destruction.

ANCHOR

The city was rocked today by an earthquake measuring seven point two on the Richter scale. Experts have not begun to assess how many billions of dollars of destruction we have endured. Buildings have been torn apart all over town, and the interchange of the King Expressway has collapsed leaving dozens of people trapped in their cars or crushed under tons of concrete. Crews estimate it may be weeks before they are able to work through the wreckage.

END INSERT

INT. TOM'S HOUSE - DAY

KNOCK, KNOCK.

Tom shuffles across the room and opens the door.

JIM

Hey, Tom.

TOM

Hey.

Jim enters.

JIM

Any luck with your car?

TOM

No. Three weeks since it was stolen and nothing. I know the cops were busy with the earthquake, and I try to understand that, but it doesn't make it any easier.

JIM

I'm sorry.

TOM

It's ok. Thanks for the rides  
to work, by the way.

JIM

Don't mention it. Have you been  
watching the news coverage of  
the King Expressway collapse?

TOM

Sort of. What's the current  
body count?

JIM

Forty-two. There was a city bus  
on it at the time which really  
jumped the numbers.

TOM

Dang. Anyone we know?

JIM

Not yet.

KNOCK, KNOCK.

The pair look at each other.

TOM

Weird. You're the only one who  
ever comes over.

JIM

Maybe they found your car.

Tom jumps up and opens the door. A policeman stands on the other  
side.

POLICEMAN

Tom Jurgen?

TOM

That's me. Did you find my car?

POLICEMAN

We believe so.

The police hands over a damaged license plate.

POLICEMAN

Is this your license plate?

Tom looks at the plate. Realization flooding his face and body. He looks at the policeman.

TOM

Oh no. The creep wrecked it,  
didn't he? Is it totaled?

The policeman looks at Tom like he delivering news of a lost loved one.

POLICEMAN

I would say so. The thief was  
on the King Expressway when  
it collapsed. Your car was  
flattened with him inside.

Tom's jaw drops.

TOM

I guess I won't press charges  
then.

POLICEMAN

I am sorry about your car.

TOM

Thank you, officer.

Tom closes the door and carries his license plate into the living room. Jim watches him in silence. Tom sits, still holding his damaged license plate.

JIM

You going to be ok?

Tom nods. He looks at Jim.

TOM

Well, he didn't get away with  
it.

THE END