

This Aint Your Car

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I arrived at work one day and the day cook named Gary told me a story of his two vehicles that had both recently broken down, and asked me to drive him down the street about a mile to his car that had not made it all the way to work that morning. The bartender agreed to hold all orders until I got back and we headed out to the parking lot.

Gary's wife was in the parking lot, standing in front of the pawnshop that shared our strip mall. They shouted back and forth about the logistics of getting their vehicles in order. I stopped and waited for them to stop shouting across the parking lot. Gary stopped beside me.

A moment later they seemed to work out the details and Gary turned to open the passenger door of a nearby car, which I of course, assumed was his other broken-down vehicle. He crawled in and sat down and I waited for him to grab whatever it was that he was grabbing.

But instead he reached for the door and just before pulling it shut he looked up at me and asked, "What's up? You coming?"

"Yeah, sure," I replied. "What are you getting?"

"What do you mean, what am I getting? I thought you were driving me to my car."

"Well, yeah, my car's over there," I replied, pointing. "Did you need to grab something before we go?"

"Umm..." he replied slowly. "I thought this was your car."

"Nope." I shook my head.

"So whose car is this?"

I shrugged. "I don't know."

And just as a look of shock came across Gary's face I saw movement from the pawnshop as someone burst out the door. "Hey!" the man shouted. "What the fuck are you doing in my car?"

But Gary was already leaping out. He slammed the door behind him and jumped away from the vehicle. "I'm sorry, I'm sorry dude! I thought it was his car."

The man at the pawnshop took several quick, angry steps toward us, his arms puffed out to his sides, muscles flexed and fists clenched. He stopped at the edge of the curb and glared suspiciously as Gary sprinted toward my car. I waved a quick apology and chuckled.

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