

AUTO FOCUS

With drivers these days distracted by cell phones, GPS devices, iPods, portable DVD players and grande lattes to go, it's a miracle there aren't more car accidents. Happily, Hollywood is ready to take up the slack — and not just by crashing and burning would-be blockbusters like “Speed Racer.”

Everyone enjoys a good smashup, though it's not much fun if the person you've run over remains half-alive and wedged through your windshield. That's the plot of “Stuck,” the new Mena Suvari thriller opening Friday. Here are five more movies, from deadly dramas to goofy B-flicks, that take a twisted delight in twisted metal.

MEET JOE BLACK (1998)

Dead Man's Curve: Claire Forlani chats up a stranger (Brad Pitt) in a coffee shop. Is romance brewing? Not when he steps outside and is blindsided abruptly by a bus. It's one



of the most shocking pedestrian crossings in movie history.

Accident Report: Pitt's body is inhabited by Death himself, who offers Forlani's dad (Anthony Hopkins) a brief reprieve so Death can get a taste for life ... and Forlani.

CRASH (1996)

Dead Man's Curve: Ever slowed down to gawk at a car accident? This David Cronenberg



Crashing the party: “Final Destination 2” (l.), “Death Proof”

masterpiece proves you're not alone, not when James Spader can get turned on by accidentally killing Holly Hunter's husband.

Accident Report: License to kill? That's just the beginning when Hunter discovers a subculture that loves to wreck their own bodies when they're not enjoying some “auto” sexuality.

FINAL DESTINATION 2 (2003)

Dead Man's Curve: When a young woman “sees” a freeway smashup of epic proportions about to occur, she blocks an entrance ramp

to lower the body count. She succeeds, but the accident that happens is still spectacularly over-the-top.

Accident Report: Death isn't pleased about being cheated of its prey and hunts down the survivors one by one.

RESERVATION ROAD (2007)

Dead Man's Curve: Some people are just losers. So, of course, the day lousy father Mark Ruffalo runs over and kills Joaquin Phoenix's son, it's also the rare day when he had decided to spend quality time with his own kid.

Accident Report: Some parents don't forget. Phoenix becomes obsessed with discovering who killed his boy then drove away; hiring Ruffalo as his attorney is an unintentionally good first step.

DEATH PROOF (2007)

Dead Man's Curve: Stuntman Mike (Kurt Russell) has a modified car that is “death proof” — for the driver. His latest female passenger discovers that the hard way when she goes flying through the windshield.

Accident Report: Mike roughs it up with the wrong gals when he tries to run Zoe Bell and her friends off the road. Sometimes road hogs become road kill, though not always this entertainingly.

Michael Giltz

ZOOM
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