

FAULT LINES

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Chapter 1

FEAR STRIKES

Ben lives in a small town.
It is in California.
His mom goes to the store.
He stays at home alone.

Soon Ben feels a rumble.
The house shakes.
It moves a little at first.
Then it rocks.

Dishes break.
Pieces of the ceiling fall.
It is an earthquake.

Ben thinks.
He knows quake drills.
They had them at school.
The boy crawls under a table.
Then the house falls.
It buries him.





Soon the shaking stops.
Ben is alive.
But he is trapped.
He calls out.


People hear him and rush to help.
They start to dig.
Some move bricks.
Others shift wood.
Helpers work through the night.

Ben is scared.
Two days pass.
Then he sees a crack of light.



The crack gets wider.
An arm reaches in.
There are rescuers.
They pull Ben out.
People cheer.





This boy was lucky.
Many were ready.
Why?
His town is on a *fault line*.
It is a big one.