

TITLE CARD: The "Nuts & Holts" logo SLIDES into frame. A quick, JAUNTY THEME SONG plays. We see a montage of establishing shots that lead into...

EXT. THE DIGIACOMO'S NEW HOME - DAY

...A waist-up shot of HGTV power couple DALTON (late 40s, charming, arrogant, stubborn) and CAROLINE (late 40s, spunky, confident by way of delusion, a Jane Krakowski type). It feels like we're watching your typical home renovation show.

DALTON

When we first met the Digiacomo's, they were first-time homeowners with a big fixer-upper on their hands. But now that fixer-upper is a home they'll remember forever.

CUT TO:

...A YOUNG COUPLE (The Digiacomos) standing between Dalton and Caroline.

CAROLINE

All right DiGiacomos, are you ready to see your new dream home?

THE DIGIACOMOS

YES!!

ZOOM OUT to REVEAL TWO LARGE BOARDS on wheels with Dalton and Caroline's faces on them. PRODUCERS wheel away the boards to *then* REVEAL a modest, but very nice HOUSE. Cheesy, inspiring music plays underneath.

MR. DIGIACOMO

What?! No way!

MS. DIGIACOMO

(Teary-eyed)
Oh my god!

INT. THE DIGIACOMO'S NEW HOME - CONTINUED

We watch them walk through the front door for the first time, and we see a montage of BEFORE and AFTER shots of the rooms.

MS. DIGIACOMO

Oh my gosh, this is gorgeous.

MR. DIGIACOMO

Wow...I-I'm speechless.

CAROLINE

So? Do you love it?

MS. DIGIACOMO
Love it? It's more amazing than I
could've ever imagined.

DALTON
I was hoping you said no so I could
live here!

They share a hardy laugh.

INT. THE DIGIACOMO'S NEW HOME - THE LIVING ROOM - CONTINUED

CAROLINE
Eileen, we know you wanted an open,
contemporary feel, so we added
these super chic French doors.

MS. DIGIACOMO
(weeping)
I've always wanted French doors!

INT. THE DIGIACOMO'S NEW HOME - THE BASEMENT - CONTINUED

DALTON
And Steve, we turned your cluttered
basement into every guy's dream.

We see a BEFORE shot of a CLUTTERED BASEMENT that SWEEPS into
an AFTER shot of a MAN CAVE adorned with SPORTS MEMORABILIA.

MR. DIGIACOMO
Whoa! Honey look, my man cave! Aw
the guys are gonna love this!

MS. DIGIACOMO
Uh-oh, I think you just created a
monster!

They share another emphatic laugh before jumping back to...

EXT. THE DIGIACOMO'S NEW HOME - CONTINUED

...the Digiacomo's between the Holts again, facing camera.

MR. DIGIACOMO
We can't thank you both enough. You
two bring so much joy to people.

DALTON
And that's why we do what we do.

CAROLINE

The last 2 months were challenging,
but so worth it to see the smiles
on your faces. And remember--

(To camera)

If you need to bring a little magic
into your home...

ALL

No project's too big for a couple
of Nuts and Holts!

We hold on this exciting moment for a beat until...

PRODUCER (O.S.)

All right we're clear!

CUT TO A NEW POV: The real world, devoid of picturesque
lighting and uplifting music. Dalton and Caroline's picture-
perfect smiles fade. They look miserable, even.

DALTON

(cold)

Your line was "the last two months
were 'tough', not 'challenging.'"

CAROLINE

(dismissive)

Well "challenging" felt better.

The Digiacomo's are thrown by the sudden shift in tone.

MS. DIGIACOMO

(timid)

This has been such an amazing
experience.

The Holts ignore them. They awkwardly wait for their cue.

PRODUCER (O.S.)

All right we're gonna go again!
Let's get happy, people!

Dalton and Caroline come to life again, smiling big.

PRODUCER (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Beautiful! Aaand ACTION!!

END OF COLD OPEN

ACT IINT. THE DIGIACOMO'S LIVING ROOM - LATER

Dalton and Caroline are decompressing on the couch. Caroline has on EYE MASKS, while Dalton uses a MASSAGE GUN on his leg.

DALTON

They were so fucking annoying. Why was she crying about French doors?

CAROLINE

Oh please, Dalton. She's allowed to be happy about whatever sad, weird thing she wants.

DALTON

(mocking)

"Honey, look! My man cave!" What the fuck was that?

PAT (jovial, eager to please, timid, a Cousin Greg/Nicholas Braun-type) walks up, handing them each a WATER BOTTLE.

PAT

Good job today guys. Dalton, that thing you said about shiplap was really funny--

CAROLINE

Pat, this water is way too cold. Here, hold this in your hands until it's room temperature.

PAT

I...ok...ooh wow that is cold.

DALTON

Oh also Pat, why was lunch so late? Did you travel by camel?

PAT

Sorry traffic was bad today. I'll make sure it's better tomorrow.

CAROLINE

Pat, one last thing. Blue really isn't your color. I wouldn't wear it anymore if I were you.

PAT

Got it, won't wear blue ever again.

LESLIE (late 40s, male, gay, cheeky, pretentious, a classic sleazeball) strides in.

LESLIE

Hello my stars! Incredible job.
Truly magical. Like watching angels
make love to the entire cast of
Riverdale. Gorgeous! Muah!

DALTON

Just tell us what's wrong, Leslie.

LESLIE

Am I that obvious? Ok fine. So, we
didn't get the Amazon deal--

DALTON

What!? You said it was done!

LESLIE

Well, it **was** until Chip and Joanna
Gaines decided to throw their fancy
little cowboy hats into the ring.

Dalton and Caroline both groan with frustration.

DALTON

Those country-fried fucks wouldn't
even have a career if we didn't
make home reno shows popular. And
here they are stealing our time
slot **and** our partners.

CAROLINE

They are such inconsiderate losers-
(then, irritated)
Pat, how's my water?

PAT

Umm still cold. Hey can I maybe put
it down? I can't feel my hands.

LESLIE

Ok, deep breaths everyone. We may
have lost Amazon, but we **did** land a
deal with--drum roll, please...Pat!

Still holding the water, Pat panics and stomps on the ground.

LESLIE (CONT'D)

Purinaaaa!

DALTON

We don't have a dog.

LESLIE

And ya don't need one! Purina is making food for humans now, and want the Holts to be the face of this revolutionary gross product.

CAROLINE

First we're eating dog food, then what? Dancing with Stars? We're not desperate, Leslie.

LESLIE

Funny you say that. The reason I was late today was actually not because of an emergency teeth whitening appointment like I said. I had a meeting with the network and...ratings are down.

DALTON

And JFK's been shot. We've been hearing it for the last year, Les.

LESLIE

Yeah...but it's bad this time.

CAROLINE

How bad? "Martha Stewart going to jail" bad or "Woody Allen marrying his step-daughter" bad?

LESLIE

Woody Allen...They might pull the plug on us.

DALTON

Are you kidding me? We have like two bad seasons and they're gonna drop the best show on the network?

LESLIE

The thing is, we're not the best anymore. There are a million home reno shows now. And you two are kinda fading into the background.

CAROLINE

I feel faint. Pat hold my legs so the blood rushes back to my head.

She leans back and kicks her legs out. Pat holds them up.

DALTON

What about Patchouli? We're the top home goods brand at Target, right?

LESLIE

Still dealing with the backlash from those blankets that activated shingles in senior citizens. So, no that's also bad.

CAROLINE

God, everyone wants "affordable" products until they start getting skin rashes.

DALTON

Did the network say why ratings are down or just send us a big "fuck you" with no help?

LESLIE

All I know is viewers think you're too "Hollywood" now and they can't connect with you anymore. We'll have to make you feel "hometown-y" again. Maybe get a video of you eating ice cream out of a pickup truck in a cornfield. I don't know I'm working on it.

PAT

Um...well I kinda always liked when you did the demolition on the house yourselves, back when the show started. So maybe that could help?

DALTON

Pat, please, people with health insurance are talking.

LESLIE

Actually, that's not a bad idea. It might help us capture the Nuts and Holts magic people fell in love with.

CAROLINE

(whining)

I hate demo day. The whole point of getting this famous was so I didn't have to sweat ever again.

LESLIE

Well we don't have any better ideas right now. So we try demo again or the show goes bye-bye. Capiche?

REVEAL the Digiacamo's nearby. We never left their home.

MR. DIGIACOMO

Hey, so how much longer do you think you're gonna be here for?

INT. THE HOLT'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Dalton watches the news on the couch. The lower third on the screen reads "Senator Blakely's Son Missing".

NEWS ANCHOR

Police are still investigating the disappearance of 28-year-old Max Blakely, son of New York Senator Tom Blakely. His disappearance is being linked to whoever is responsible for the series of mysterious murders across Long Island over the last few months...

The anchor's voice trails as we see Caroline check the dishwasher. It's completely full.

CAROLINE

Didn't I tell you to unload the dishwasher this morning?

DALTON

I forgot.

CAROLINE

Well if you did it when I asked then you wouldn't forget.

DALTON

How profound. Another tidbit for the little self-help book you're working on.

CAROLINE

For the last time, it is a lifestyle book for troubled women and difficult gay men.

DALTON

Thank god they have you to tell them about a "life hack" for a salmon bowl. That should fix 'em.

CAROLINE

You never take my work seriously. You know I practically run Patchouli by myself, right?

DALTON

Yeah, you and a team of 30 people.

CAROLINE

Well someone has to post on social media. Do you think I like doing TikTok dances?

(Then, off a sigh)

I want a divorce.

DALTON

Yeah I know, Caroline, but that'll bury us. Forget low ratings we'll be living in a van eating Slim Jims for every meal. We need to focus on the show and the brand first, then we can worry about "this". Ok?

CAROLINE

We've been doing this for 10 years Dalton, maybe it's time to move on.

DALTON

You wanna just give up that easily?

CAROLINE

I don't know. I don't know if I can keep pretending to be this happy couple on TV. I want to go out and experience new things. New people!

DALTON

You've been "experiencing" the show's carpenter for 2 years now.

CAROLINE

Oh like you haven't "experienced" several other women over the last decade.

Dalton's phone rings, he answers.

CAROLINE (CONT'D)

Is that one of them? Who's Cassie?

DALTON
Your daughter. Jesus can you just--

He takes a breath. They suddenly pretend everything's fine.

DALTON (CONT'D)
Hey honey, you're on speaker with
me and your mom.

CASSIE
(over the phone)
Yeah, I heard you arguing. Another
day in paradise I see.

CAROLINE
How was your day sweetie?

CASSIE
Fine. Just calling to say
goodnight.

DALTON AND CAROLINE
Goodnight!

CASSIE
Oh by the way, you forgot my
birthday again.

She hangs up. Dalton and Caroline's eyes go wide.

DALTON
Shit! Cassie? Hello?

CAROLINE
I knew I had today circled on the
calendar for a reason. But I
thought it was something important
like tax day or *my* birthday.

DALTON
Did you tell Pat to get her a gift?

CAROLINE
No, I was in charge of the cake.

DALTON
Did you get her a cake?

CAROLINE
No! I thought it was tax day!

INT. THE PETERSON HOUSE - DAY - 2 DAYS LATER

The crew sets up to film demo day. Dalton is wearing a HARDHAT and GOGGLES and holding a SLEDGEHAMMER. Caroline enters, not wearing any equipment.

DALTON

Caroline, why do you have heels on?

Reveal Caroline wearing HIGH HEELS.

CAROLINE

They're wedges. I'm basically wearing combat boots.

DALTON

And where's your hard hat?

CAROLINE

I didn't spend 2 hours in hair and makeup to look like lesbian Bob the Builder.

LESLIE

Ok let's meet in the middle here. Keep the heels, wear the helmet.

CAROLINE

Fine.

LESLIE

You're a star, Caroline. All right let's destroy this fucking house!

CUT TO:

Dalton unsuccessfully destroying a KITCHEN ISLAND.

DALTON

(struggling)

Is this thing made out of fucking diamonds? Oh my god...

CUT TO:

Dalton using a CROWBAR to pry off CABINETS. A SCREW flies off and shatters a window. He looks into the camera, exhausted.

CUT TO:

Caroline ripping off a shower curtain. Dalton walks in.

DALTON (CONT'D)

What are you doing?

CAROLINE
I took off the shower curtain.

DALTON
I could've hired a cat to take down
the shower curtain.

CUT TO:

Dalton still fighting with the kitchen island.

DALTON (CONT'D)
Pat, get in here and help me.

PAT
Shouldn't I have a helmet or
something?

DALTON
Just get over here.

CUT TO:

Pat doing the majority of the work and Dalton coming in for
the final swing.

DALTON (CONT'D)
Finally! Whoo! That's how ya do it!

PAT
Didn't they wanna keep the island?

CUT TO:

Dalton, sweaty and exhausted, sizing up a large wall.
Caroline goes to take a picture of him.

CAROLINE
Dalton, do something action-y for
Instagram.

She snaps a picture.

DALTON
(irritated)
Can you just help me for once
instead of playing paparazzi?

LESLIE
Relax, Dalton. We're almost done.
Let's just do our jobs.

DALTON

Oh you want me to do my job? Fine
watch me do my fucking job.

This next sequence is seen through a TV viewer's POV.

DALTON (CONT'D)

(To camera)

Hey Nuts and Holts fam! It's me,
Dalton Holt. Bad news. Looks like
our show might go off the air soon?
**"Oh, Dalton, no, what? We love you
and your show!"** Nope, ya don't! Cuz
you're not watching me anymore! So,
as they say in show biz, we're
fucked. We are fucked! In fact,
we're so fucked, if a porn director
saw us, he'd yell "cut!"

He starts taking chunks out of the wall with his hammer,
doing so throughout the rest of his rant.

DALTON (CONT'D)

And honestly, that's great, cuz
guess what? I'm sick of acting like
I give a shit about you, or making
your "dreams come true", or
building your fucking "man caves!"
WHICH IS JUST A ROOM WITH A COUCH
AND FUCKING FOOTBALL JERSEYS!!

LESLIE

None of this will make the edit.

DALTON

And the HILARIOUS part is that as
my career flashes before my eyes,
NO ONE wants to help me! Not my
team, not my wife--no one. I've
done so much for everybody here,
and now I'm being hung out to dry
like a fucking pair of pants! But
I'm not giving up, cuz I've worked
too hard for this. And I will get
the respect I fucking DESERVE!

On "DESERVE", Dalton's swing causes most of the wall to fall
to the floor. With it falls a **DEAD BODY** - bloodied and
bruised. The camera is jolted around in shock as everybody
freaks out. We blackout over the crew's screams.

END OF ACT I

ACT IIINT. THE PETERSON HOUSE - DAY - CONTINUED

The crew stands around the body, too shocked to speak until--

PAT

Is he...is he d-dead?

DALTON

(sarcastic)

No Pat he was taking a nice little blood-soaked nap in the wall like we all do you fucking 2-by-4.

CAROLINE

What do we do? Do we call the police? Or does that make us look like Blue Lives Matter people?

DALTON

No, call the PR team. They'll know how to handle this.

PAT

What? We have to call the police! I mean this guy looks like he was murdered! Shouldn't we have like an autopsy or get like fingerprints?

LESLIE

Easy there Scooby Doo. We're not calling anybody. Pat, take the body outside so we can wrap for the day.

PAT

WHAT?!

LESLIE

The network is already on us. If they hear about this, I promise you they take us off the air tomorrow. Nobody wants that, right?

Nobody answers, assuming that question was rhetorical.

LESLIE (CONT'D)

We're losing daylight. Take our friend here out back, we finish filming, **then** we handle it. Ok?

EXT. THE PETERSON HOUSE - BACKYARD - CONTINUED

Pat struggles to drag the body, now wrapped in TARPS, out to the backyard. He groans as he leaves it in a patch of grass.

PAT
I'll be back later. Wait. No you're
dead you can't hear me. Ok sorry
just hang tight, amigo.

He does finger guns at the dead body.

PAT (CONT'D)
Why did I do that? Oh my god.

INT. THE PETERSON HOUSE - A LITTLE LATER

We jump ahead a bit. Filming has resumed. We see a very brief sequence of Dalton and Caroline fumbling over lines in a talking head. Suddenly, they're interrupted by a POUNDING on the door.

HALPERIN (O.S.)
Police! Open up!

DALTON
Shit! Which one of you rats called
the fuzz?

He looks at Pat, Pat shakes his head vigorously.

CAROLINE
Just pretend we're not here.

PAT
We have to let him in. It'll look
even more suspicious if we don't.

DALTON
Pat there is a **dead body** swaddled
in tarps in the backyard.

PAT
But it's not ours.

DALTON
Oh right. Why don't you open up and
tell him we're just holding it for
a friend you sweaty little turnip?

More pounding on the door.

HALPERIN (O.S.)
Final warning!

LESLIE
Everybody shush. I'll handle this.

Leslie cracks the door open just enough for him to lean through. OFFICER HALPERIN (oaf-ish, very Long Island, well-intentioned) stands there with a stern expression.

HALPERIN
Hey how's it goin? Got a noise complaint from the neighbors. Some loud bangin' and screamin' sounds.

LESLIE
(overly friendly)
Oh! Yeah sorry about that. Hi. Leslie. We're doing a little home renovation project for TV. Have you heard of the show Nuts and Holts?

HALPERIN
Get outta here! I love Nuts and Holts! Are you twisting my tits right now?

LESLIE
Oh certainly not.

Leslie opens the door more to reveal Dalton and Caroline.

HALPERIN
Get the eff outta here! You're Nuts and Holts! My wife and I love yous guys! I'm so sorry, this is so unprofessional of me, but I gotta get a picture.

LESLIE
We'd be insulted if you didn't!

Halperin holds up his phone for a selfie.

HALPERIN
Say "Nuts and Holts!"

Nobody says anything. Dalton and Caroline look traumatized.

HALPERIN (CONT'D)
Un-freakin-believable.

LESLIE

Well officer thanks for stopping
by, but we do have a show to film.

HALPERIN

Say no more, sorry to interrupt.
Hey, I expect a cut of the profits
if I end up on the episode. 10%!

He does a wheeze-laugh. Leslie fake laughs and walks him out.

LESLIE

You got a deal! All right, buh-bye!

Halperin turns around one last time to Dalton and Caroline.

HALPERIN

And remember: Nothin's too big for
a couple of Nuts and Holts!

Leslie nearly pushes him out and slams the door. Everyone is
relieved (and stunned) they made it out of that unscathed.

LESLIE

Jesus Christ. If I were his wife I
would kill myself. I'm serious.

DALTON

Leslie let's call it a day. We
can't risk any more close calls.

LESLIE

Yeah I think we got everything we
need today. Pat. Do the honors.

Leslie gestures toward the yard. Pat reluctantly heads out to
grab the body, while the rest of the crew waits inside.

EXT. THE PETERSON HOUSE - BACKYARD - CONTINUED

We see Pat return to where he left the body. He suddenly
stops, his eyes wide with fear as he stares at the spot.

PAT

Wait, but I...No no no no there's
no way.

INT. THE PETERSON HOUSE - CONTINUED

CAROLINE

That police officer smelled like
cold cuts.

DALTON
Yeah, somehow kinda looked like
cold cuts too.

LESLIE
Well, you'll never have to see or
smell him again.

Suddenly Pat runs back in, frantic.

PAT
Guys! I don't know how, but, but,
but--

DALTON
Spit it out Sir Mixalot.

PAT
The body is GONE!

EXT. THE PETERSON HOUSE - BACKYARD - CONTINUED

Everyone stands outside where we saw Pat leave the body. It's
just a smushed pile of grass, no corpses in sight.

PAT
I swear I left him right here.

CAROLINE
Maybe he was actually alive, and
just woke up and went home.

DALTON
You think he just woke up covered
in tarps and was like "hmm this
isn't my bed" and just like called
an uber?

LESLIE
You know what I think? I think
whatever we thought we saw *no
longer exists and never existed in
the first place. Right?*

PAT
But, it *does* exist. Leslie this is
not normal. Please we need to call
the police, now!

LESLIE
If we do that I guarantee the show
goes under. And I'm not letting one
missing dead body take us out.

DALTON

I don't know, Les. How do we just move on from this?

LESLIE

Do you know who you are? You are Dalton and Caroline Holt. The Adam and Eve of Home Renovation. The Holts I met once upon a time wouldn't let **anything** stop them. But maybe the network was right. Maybe the old Dalton and Caroline are gone, and we should just let everything you've worked so hard for slip between our fingers. I can't help but wonder what Chip and Joanna would do here. Would they let one measly corpse in their drywall ruin their empire? No. They wouldn't run and hide. They would take that body and repurpose it into a sustainable, farmhouse-style coffee table, and sell it for a marked-up price. So, Holts, do you run? Or do you make a coffee table?

DALTON

I get it, Braveheart. Jeez.
(he thinks for a beat)
Ok fine. Nobody says a word about what happened here today. Got it?

Pat tries to speak but is too dumbfounded.

CAROLINE

I am never doing blue-collar work again.

INT. THE HOLT'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - EVENING - 2 DAYS LATER

The Holts CHEF (RODRIGO) is preparing dinner. Caroline does things around the kitchen to distract herself. Dalton enters.

DALTON

Cass just texted, she'll be here in a few.

CAROLINE

What do we tell her about--
(notices Rodrigo is there)
--the "thing"?

DALTON
What thing?

CAROLINE
The **thing**. From the house. That was
hiding in the wall.

DALTON
Is this a limerick?

CAROLINE
Dalton come on. It's been 2 days
and **we** haven't even talked about
it.

DALTON
There's nothing to talk about. It
happened. We move on. We're not
telling Cassie anything, it'll just
freak her out.

We hear their DOOR OPEN.

CASSIE (O.S.)
It's me!

DALTON
In the kitchen!
(to Caroline)
Just act natural.

CAROLINE
Duh. I'm not an idiot.

CASSIE (bright, mature, straight shooter) walks in.

CAROLINE (CONT'D)
(overly happy)
Hiiii sweetie!

CASSIE
What's wrong with you?

DALTON
Your mother's just tired. Look
Cassie, we're so sorry we missed
your birthday. We felt so awful.

CAROLINE

We pulled out all the stops to make it up to you: Rodrigo's making your favorite dinner, we had a cake delivered, and we got enough gifts to make the Kardashians look middle-class.

CASSIE

Cool. Honestly, I'm just glad you remembered to invite me.

(Looking at Caroline's clothes)

What's up with your outfit? You're wearing clashing prints...

CAROLINE

Oh, I just threw this on.

CASSIE

You never just throw stuff on. Did you forget to put on makeup too?

CAROLINE

Oh, maybe? But who cares.

CASSIE

Mom you've threatened to have your makeup artists deported for not filling in your brows. Are you sure everything's ok?

CAROLINE

Yes! Now if you'll excuse me, I have to help Rodrigo with dinner.

CASSIE

You never help Rodrigo.

CAROLINE

Yes I do!

CASSIE

I know you don't, because Rodrigo and I talk shit about how you don't. Sorry, Rod.

Rodrigo shoots Cassie a disappointed look.

DALTON

Cassandra. Please. Enough.

CASSIE
Ok, ok fine. Oh, by the way I
invited Dylan for dinner.

DALTON
Great.

CASSIE
You hate Dylan! How is that great?
You're both being so weird.

DALTON
We just want your makeup birthday
to be the best it can be.

CASSIE
Ok sure. I guess I'm just happy
we're finally getting some family
time for once.

There's a knock at the door. Cassie goes to answer it and is
surprised (and not happy) to see Leslie and Pat.

CASSIE (CONT'D)
Oh...

LESLIE
(Sarcastic)
Great to see you too, hon.

CASSIE
I didn't know you were coming for
dinner.

LESLIE
We're not. We have an urgent show
thing. You understand, right?

Leslie lets himself in. Pat sheepishly steps in after him,
holding a BUNCH OF GIFT BAGS.

PAT
Hey, um, happy birthday.

He fumbles with his bags and hands her a SMALL PRESENT.

CASSIE
Aw, Pat, you didn't have to get me
anything.

PAT
(nervous, rambling)
Yeah I wasn't going to.
(MORE)

PAT (CONT'D)

But your parents sent me a list of things to get, and I wanted to get you something...from me. So now I'm giving it to you. And you're holding it...so happy birthday.

CASSIE

Well thank you that's really sweet.

Pat works up more courage to talk, but Cassie's boyfriend, DYLAN (macho, himbo-esque, unlikable) walks in.

DYLAN

There's the birthday girl!

He brings her in for a passionate kiss. As they kiss Dylan hands Pat his jacket. He takes it, not sure what to do. He waits for them to stop, looking for a window to speak. He finally just gives up and walks away, joining the rest of the group in the living room.

CAROLINE

So what's this surprise you have for us, Leslie?

LESLIE

Oh, you'll see.

A SERVER walks by with WINE GLASSES. Pat grabs two and chugs them.

LESLIE (CONT'D)

Pat, you're drinking like a southern housewife who just found out her husband's cheating on her.

PAT

I have been a mess for the last 48 hours. I can't eat. I can't sleep. We should've done something about **the thing** when we had the chance.

LESLIE

Well like a fart in the river it's gone with the current.

PAT

I mean, where did it go?

LESLIE

The fart? In the river with the cu-

PAT
 No I mean the-
 (whispers)
 Body. Who could've taken it? The
 murderer?

DALTON
 Ok let's take it easy. We don't
 even know if there was a
 "murderer", right? So, why don't we
 all just forget about it before we
 make ourselves paranoid?

Rodrigo CLAPS LOUDLY behind them, causing everyone to jump.

RODRIGO
 Sorry. Dinner is served.

INT. THE HOLT'S HOUSE - DINING ROOM - LATER

At the table. Cassie, Dylan and Leslie eat, but Dalton,
 Caroline, and Pat play with their food. It's eerily quiet.

DYLAN
 I love your shirt Mr. H.

DALTON
 Thanks, it's tweed.

DYLAN
 Oh, like the sound that birds make?

Dalton stares in disbelief.

CASSIE
 How's filming been going?

No one answers.

CASSIE (CONT'D)
 Great chat. Lovely birthday dinner.

PAT
 I mean I think it's going pretty
 well. Your dad made this really
 funny joke about shiplap last week-

CASSIE
 Can you guys just tell me what's
 going on? You're so obvious. Just
 tell me and I'll stop asking.

CAROLINE

Everything is fine Cassandra. Let's talk about something else.

CASSIE

Fine...Dylan and I are moving in together next month.

DALTON AND CAROLINE

What?!

CAROLINE (CONT'D)

You've been together for what? 6 months?

CASSIE

Mom, it's been over 2 years. You and Dad were married by this point.

DALTON

And you're using that to justify that this is a good idea?

CASSIE

So you forget my birthday, but you get to breathe down my neck about every decision I make?

LESLIE

All right, this is getting a little out of hand, no? Let's talk about something else.

(then, to Dylan.)

Dylan, remind me, where did you go to college?

DYLAN

Oh, I was home-colleged.

LESLIE

That's incredible.

DALTON

Fine, you wanna know what's really going on with us?

Everyone looks at Dalton anxiously.

DALTON (CONT'D)

The truth is...we might go off the air. Ratings are bad and Amazon would rather work with Evangelical Foghorn Leghorn. It's bad, Cass.

Beat. Another awkward silence looms until Leslie stands up.

LESLIE

Well since we're already talking about the show, I think this is the perfect segue for my surprise.

INT. THE HOLT'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - A LITTLE LATER

Everyone sits on couches facing a large TV, except Cassie who watches from the kitchen, drinking wine, still steaming.

LESLIE

All right team, we have to rekindle some of that vintage Nuts and Holts magic we were oozing many moons ago. So, I had the brilliant idea of having Pat go through hours of old footage we could use for inspiration. Without further ado...

Pat presses play on his laptop and a MONTAGE of OLD CLIPS from Nuts & Holts play on their TV:

-- A funny demolition fail that causes Dalton and Caroline to break out laughing.

-- A series of talking head bloopers. One ends in a kiss.

-- Them sitting on the couch after finishing a reno, a YOUNG CASSIE joining them.

Everyone smiles and laughs as they watch, even Cassie. As she turns to grab more wine she notices a LETTER on the KITCHEN COUNTER. It reads "TO THE NUTS AND HOLTS TEAM". She opens it to see a message spelled in magazine clippings.

"Dalton and Caroline,

We know you have the body. Return it where you found it. This is your only warning.

- M"

CASSIE

Mom. Dad. What is this?

She brings it into the living room. They clamor to read it.

CAROLINE

Cassandra, where did you find this?

CASSIE

It was on the kitchen counter. What does "return the body" mean?

DALTON

You gotta be fucking kidding me. What the fuck is this?

LESLIE

All right, Dalton let's calm down.

DALTON

You've been telling me to calm down for the last 3 days and now this whole thing has gotten very real!

PAT

I knew we should've called the police as soon as we found it.

CASSIE

Hello?! I deserve to know what's going on!

DYLAN

Yeah and me too.

EVERYONE

(some variation of)
Dylan shut up!

LESLIE

Ok let's think. Sure the note's creepy, but honestly, it's a little tacky. I mean, magazine clippings? Very 2005. I'm sure it's nothing.

Suddenly the SLEDGEHAMMER Dalton used to discover the body CRASHES through a LARGE WINDOW and lands in front of them.

DALTON

PAT GRAB THE EMMYS!!

END OF ACT II

ACT IIIINT. THE HOLT'S HOUSE - NIGHT - LIVING ROOM

Everyone sits pensively in the living room. Officer Halperin is on the scene filling out a report.

DALTON

Then out of nowhere, this hammer came flying through the window.

HALPERIN

Would you have any reason to assume someone might want to harm you?

DALTON

We've had some crazy fans before but nobody's ever attacked us.

HALPERIN

Hmmm...Maybe someone from another show was looking to take out some of the competition.

He winks.

DALTON

Are you making a fucking joke right now? Someone just tried to kill me.

HALPERIN

Yeah I'm sorry that was ill-timed. Ya know you yell a lot more than you do on the TV.

CAROLINE

Um, sorry, Officer...

HALPERIN

Oh please, call me Sal.

CAROLINE

No thank you. We think whoever threw the hammer also left this.

She hands Halperin the note. He scans it, his eyes go wide.

HALPERIN

Where did you find this?

CAROLINE

In our kitchen. We have no clue how it got there.

HALPERIN

Yikes...This--pardon my french--is fuckin' bad. Any idea why you might've gotten this?

PAT

Officer, we found a body! A dead one. It was at the house you came to. But we didn't say anything and I tried to keep it a secret but I can't anymore and I'm sorry!!

HALPERIN

All right, breathe kid. Jeez, is he always like this?

CASSIE

(to Dalton and Caroline)
Are you fucking kidding me? Why didn't you tell me?

DALTON

Because Cass what are you gonna do?

CAROLINE

We just wanted to protect you.

CASSIE

Oh yeah, I feel so safe. Let me just grab a helmet real quick in case someone drives a truck through the window next. You should've called the police!

PAT

Thank you! That's what I said!

DALTON

Well doesn't matter now because it's gone anyway.

CASSIE

What do you mean gone?

DALTON

We don't know where the body is.

PAT

Leslie told me to bring it outside so we could finish filming. And a couple hours later it was gone.

CASSIE

So you found a dead body, lost it like it was a fucking sock in the washing machine, and then tried to hide it from me? Oh and the state?

LESLIE

Hey Cassie, just let your parents handle this.

CASSIE

Hey Leslie, shut the fuck up. I bet this whole thing is your fault.

The group argues loudly over each other for a beat until--

HALPERIN

ALL RIGHT!!! EVERYONE PIPE DOWN!!!
Clearly you folks have had an eventful week. You're in even deeper shit than you realize.
(to Dalton, Caroline, Leslie, and Pat)
You 4, come with me.

Pat turns and throws up in a nearby VASE.

INT. CAROLINE'S CRAFT ROOM - LATER LATER

Everyone sits in the room together now facing Halperin. They all have a hard time sitting on AWKWARDLY SHORT STOOLS.

DALTON

Has this room always been here?

CAROLINE

It's my craft room. It's where I go to get zen. And drink.

HALPERIN

Let me just start off by saying I'm a little hurt you lied to me about the body at the house the other day. The Dalton and Caroline I know wouldn't have done that.

CAROLINE

Oh god are you gonna arrest us?

LESLIE

Before you answer that--Sal, you're a fan, right?

(MORE)

LESLIE (CONT'D)

Whaddaya say we put you in an episode after all? Maybe get you some custom merch...?

HALPERIN

Are you trying to bribe a police officer? I'm genuinely asking, I've never been bribed before.

(then, off a sigh)

Ok look I'm not gonna arrest you.

CAROLINE

Oh thank god. Pat get us some drinks. They're in the drawer labeled "yarn".

HALPERIN

Hold on, you're not exactly outta the woods just yet. Ya see this note that you received definitely ain't a prank. This "M" here, is the signature of a serial killer we've been after for months now.

PAT

I think I'm gonna throw up again.

HALPERIN

We also linked him to the disappearance of Senator Blakely's son. I have a feeling the body you found might be him.

LESLIE

That body was stuck inside of drywall. It was never meant to be found.

HALPERIN

That's the kicker: it **was** supposed to be found. "M", whoever he is, likes to leave clues connecting his murders. This is the one we found in the Senator's house.

Halperin pulls out a picture of another note. Also written in magazine clippings. It reads: "**Senator. Your son has his back against the wall. Dry those tears. Look inside yourself.**"

HALPERIN (CONT'D)

It's cryptic, but based on this, it makes sense he would be "**inside drywall**". Like in a house.

(MORE)

HALPERIN (CONT'D)

Is that making sense? I'm not a great oral communicator.

DALTON

Can we pause for a sec? This is **insane**. Missing people, serial killer notes--we shouldn't be involved.

HALPERIN

If you're getting these warning signs, you **are** involved. Now, any other officer would probably get you guys in serious trouble for what you did. Cuz let's be honest it was pretty illegal. But you're lucky you got me on the job, cuz I wanna help you out.

LESLIE

(muttering)

We feel really fucking lucky.

HALPERIN

So here's what I'm thinkin'. You 4 work with me, we catch this guy, and boom, you clear up your names. How does that sound?

DALTON

Are you high? That's the worst idea I've ever heard. We're not gonna risk our lives to help you solve some random murder case.

(then, an epiphany)

Unless...maybe we're not clearing our names. We're rebranding. Maybe we're picking up momentum in the press and gaining sympathy and favorability with viewers.

CAROLINE

You think this could help out with the show?

DALTON

I mean hey, we spend a few weeks playing detective, catch this dickwad murderer guy, everyone loves us and we're on top again. Right, Les?

LESLIE

America might eat this up. We do a press tour, have you crying on 60 Minutes--I bet the network orders 2 more seasons then and there.

PAT

Ok wait wait wait, everyone stop! Please. Let's really think about this. Are we going to risk our lives for the possibility of getting a couple more seasons?

LESLIE

This totally opens up the Holt-verse. Hello! I'm talking a book series, a podcast--We'd finally dominate with Mid-western women 25 to 34.

DALTON

Then we're back on top! Chip and Joanna would have to end a fucking war if they wanna beat us.

CAROLINE

We are so lucky we found this body. Great idea to do demo day, Pat.

Pat is distraught, just sitting there in shock.

HALPERIN

So whaddaya say, Holts? And the two other people who follow them around?

Dalton, Caroline, and Leslie take a beat to share approving glances. Pat begs them not to with his eyes.

DALTON

You got yourself a deal. But not one word of this gets leaked to the press. Nobody knows about any of this until we look good. Got it?

HARD CUT TO:

A montage of exactly the opposite of what Dalton wanted. We see news clips detailing the discovery of the body and how the Holts are involved.

Different headlines and breaking news blurbs say things akin to "Dalton and Caroline Holt Suspects in Murder Case".

ANCHOR 1

Breaking news, celebrity House Flippers Dalton and Caroline Holt are being considered primary suspects in the disappearance and murder of Senator Blakely's son.

CUT TO:

A different news program.

ANCHOR 2

The Holts, known for their hit show "Nuts and Holts" claim the body was hidden in a home they were renovating for their show and have no idea how it got there.

CUT TO:

A different news program.

ANCHOR 3

Whatever the case may be, I can assure you this is not a good look for the once-beloved stars. If I were them, I'd start liquidating.

CUT TO:

We see a scene from THE VIEW:

WHOOPI GOLDBERG

You want me to believe that this body just magically shows up in this house and you don't know how it got there? I'm not buyin' it! Kiss that show of yours goodbye, Holts. You're toast!

The audience roars with applause.

END OF EPISODE