
The end is near. Pass the gravy.
CODE HOLIDAY
Greetings from the Attberry's

LOG LINE

Hoping to mend their fractured bonds, a family of estranged misfits gathers for one final, high-stakes holiday to confront their messy past, under the guise that Christmas isn't just a holiday—it’s the code name for the end of the world.



Synopsis

As “the holiday” approaches, Rose and Al prepare to welcome their three adult children home. Rose cooks obsessively, clinging to routine and prayer, while Al anxiously watches the window, convinced something will go wrong. Their youngest daughter, Olive, senses the tension immediately, but Rose deflects with forced cheer and intrusive questions, revealing her fear that her children’s lives—and souls—are unraveling.





Synopsis

Chaos arrives with the family. Joey rushes in with his husband Mateo, breathless and shaken, exposing Al's unresolved discomfort with his son's marriage. Soon after, eldest daughter Nova makes a dramatic entrance, slipping outside as Al rushes to her rescue—revealing their deep, unspoken bond. Nova's recent divorce hangs heavily in the air, especially as Rose fixates on her weight and life choices. Fractures widen during dinner when a rebellious prayer sparks arguments, only softened by Mateo's quiet grace. Despite Rose's insistence on a rigid holiday schedule, the night refuses to behave.



Synopsis

Nova encounters a hooded intruder in the kitchen—revealed to be Zeke Espinosa, her teenage heartbreak, lonely and desperate not to face “the holiday” alone. Old wounds resurface as Nova and Zeke confront their past: a secret relationship, public rejection, and the insecurities that shaped them both. Meanwhile, long-buried truths explode as it’s revealed that “the holiday” is the family’s code word for the approaching apocalypse. In the tension, Al admits to infidelity, Rose confesses her terror of losing her family in both life and the afterlife, and Olive finally allows herself to feel again after years of emotional numbness.

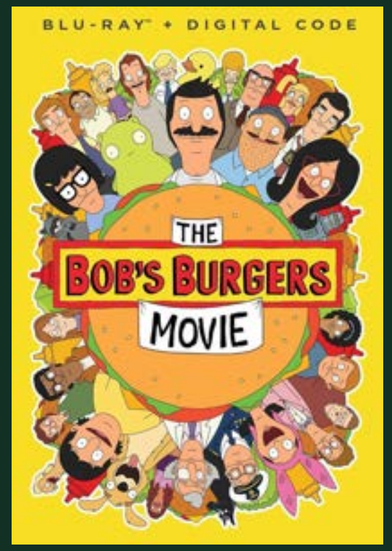


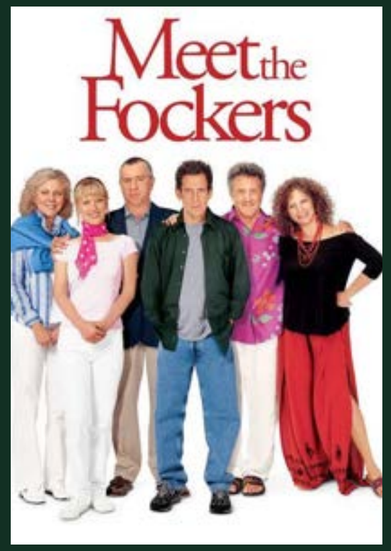
Synopsis

As power fails and the final hours near, forgiveness slowly replaces fear. Al reconciles with Joey after witnessing his son's bravery and compassion. Nova forgives her father and reclaims her sense of self. Olive brings the family together one last time with laughter, honesty, and an improvised ritual of gratitude. In the end, the family gathers in a single room—singing, crying, holding one another—as Rose gently sings Auld Lang Syne and blows out the final candle, choosing love over fear as the darkness closes in.

Comparisons

This script blends the absurd-with-the-intimate in the same way Don’t Look Up pairs world-ending stakes with human pettiness, using an impending apocalypse to strip away denial and force emotional truth. Like Bob’s Burgers and The Mitchells vs. the Machines, it finds humor in flawed, deeply loving people who bicker, miscommunicate, and ultimately show up for one another, embracing warmth over cynicism. The multigenerational tension, lived-in arguments, and hard-earned reconciliations echo the grounded comedy of Meet the Fockers, while its holiday setting, unresolved resentments, and emphasis on forgiveness closely mirror the emotional DNA of The Family Stone. Together, these influences shape a story that is simultaneously chaotic and tender—where laughter, grief, and love coexist, and family remains both the problem and the solution.



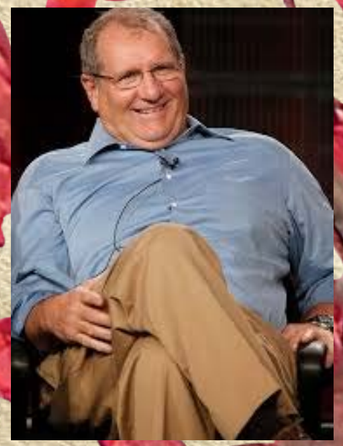


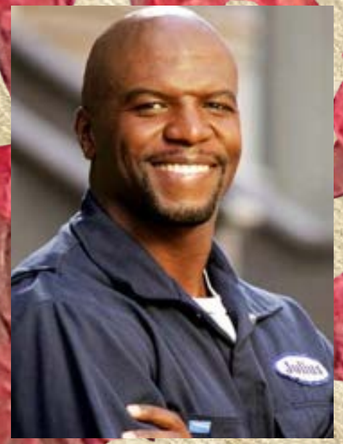






Meet the Cast







Al Atteberry -60's

is a devoted but tightly wound father whose protectiveness borders on paranoia, especially during the “Holiday.” He masks his deep anxieties with gruff humor, masculinity, and dramatic overreactions to ordinary tasks. Despite his rough edges and old-school stubbornness, Al’s love for his family runs deep, and his soft spot for Nova reveals a warm, steady tenderness beneath his panic-prone exterior.







Rose Atteberry-60's

Rose is a high-energy, eccentric, hyper-organized mother who channels all her emotions into cooking, planning, and keeping her family on schedule. She’s loving but intrusive, often masking her fears with controlling tendencies and well-intention-ed but poorly timed questions. Though her intensity can overwhelm the room, her actions come from a place of deep care, and beneath her perfectionism lies a woman terrified of losing the closeness of her family.

Meet the Cast













Nova Atteberry- 40's

is the eldest child, warm-hearted but emotionally exhausted as she navigates a recent divorce and the pressure of returning home for the Holiday. Sensitive, intuitive, and deeply loyal, she tends to absorb the family's chaos rather than contribute to it—yet her sarcasm and dry humor slip out when she's pushed too far. Though she's adored by her father and treated delicately by the rest of the family, Nova is quietly struggling to rebuild her confidence and sense of self.

Zeke Esposito-40's

Zeke Espinosa is Nova's childhood crush and first heartbreak, a man shaped by regret and roads not taken. Once charismatic but cowardly, Zeke spent his life choosing safety over truth, hiding his love until it was too late and paying the price in loneliness. His return is not heroic but human—he arrives broken, afraid of dying alone, and never rekindling his love for Nova.

Meet the Cast







Joey Atteberry 30's

Joey is the family's second oldest and only son, a gentle, earnest man who learned early how to survive by keeping the peace. Married to Mateo, Joey has spent much of his life absorbing his father's disappointment without ever fully naming it, choosing patience over confrontation. He is quietly brave—deeply loyal, emotionally present, and willing to step into danger when it matters, even if his hands are shaking.







Mateo Atteberry-30's

Mateo is Joey's husband, warm, thoughtful, and quietly resilient. He enters the family as an outsider yet possesses an emotional intelligence that allows him to navigate tension with grace rather than defensiveness. Mateo is openly afraid of the apocalypse, but unafraid of vulnerability—his strength lies in his softness, his ability to bless, soothe, and forgive without being asked.

Meet the Cast







Olive Atteberry 30's

Olive is the youngest child, sharp-tongued, observant, and seemingly detached, using humor and mischief as armor against emotional vulnerability. While others feel too much, Olive has trained herself to feel almost nothing—convinced that numbness is safer than heartbreak. She watches her family like an anthropologist, noticing every crack long before anyone else does, yet rarely allowing herself to be seen.

Meet the Team



Steve Deering- Producer

Steve Deering trained in film development and production at the Robert Evans Company at Paramount Pictures under the late great producer Robert Evans. From there, he went on to a career in development, serving as both a screenwriter and story analyst. In his story analyst work, he has assisted countless up and coming writers and filmmakers as well as big name studios such as Disney, New Line, Warner Bros, Focus Features, and others. He has served as a consultant on films such as Free Guy, Moonlight, The Neon Demon, and many more. He is also a producer on several upcoming feature films.



Laura Aitken- Director

Laura Aitken is a producer and development associate from santa Cruz, California. A longtime supporter of indie films and cinemas, Laura has worked in development and production for upcoming features, pilots, and shorts. Laura's most recent project UK-based feature film drama, Of God's Men, recently wrapped filming and is in post-prodution, with an eye towards the festivals in the new year. Having graduated the Royal College of Art in London for a Master's degree in Visual Communication, Laura still continues to work on features, TV series, and shorts in both the US and UK.

Meet the Team



Vanessa Mari Evans- Screenwriter

Vanessa Mari Evans is a storyteller who operates at the intersection of high-concept imagination and tactical execution. A graduate of the American Musical and Dramatic Academy (AMDA) NYC, Vanessa's writing is defined by a "performer-first" philosophy—creating complex, high-stakes characters that demand a powerhouse presence on screen.

A seasoned Director and published Author ("What the Bleep!?! I'm Directing a Children's Musical"), Vanessa spent years as the Theatre Coordinator for the Arts and Learning Conservatory of Orange County. Her experience helming large-scale productions like Beauty and the Beast and Peter and the Starcatcher has honed a unique "Director's Eye" that translates into visually rhythmic and structurally rigorous screenwriting.

With extensive on-camera experience in feature films (Aria Remix) and digital series (Green Girl Diaries), Vanessa bridges the gap between the page and the performance. She is known for "out-of-the-box" narrative strategies that produce inventively expressive worlds, ensuring that every script she develops is as logistically sound as it is emotionally resonant.













Mood/ Tone

Old-school Sitcom Christmas feels like a warm glow in the dark—colorful lights twinkling from every rooftop, houses bursting with tinsel, ornaments, and nostalgia. Everything feels a little brighter, a little cozier, and delightfully over-decorated, like the season itself is meant to be savored, not streamlined.

Budget

ABOVE-THE-LINE — $10,000
- Writer: $2,000
- Director: $4,000
- Producer(s): 4,000

CAST — $10,000
- Lead actors (5): $3,000
- Supporting (2): $1,000

CREW — $22,000
- Director of Photography: $5,000
- Sound Mixer: $4,000
- Gaffer / Grip: $3,000
- Assistant Camera / Swing: $2,000
- Production Designer / Art Lead: $2,500
- Hair & Makeup/Wardrobe: $2,000
- PA's: $1,000

EQUIPMENT — $6,000
- Camera package: $3,000
- Lighting & grip: $2,000
- Sound gear: $1,000

LOCATIONS & PRODUCTION COSTS — $5,000
- Location fees / Permits: $ 2,000
- Insurance (short-term): $ 2,800
- Entertainment Attorney: $1,200
- Set dressing / props: $ 2000
- Wardrobe: $1,000

CRAFT SERVICES & MEALS — $1,000
- Meals (cast & crew): $1,000
- Craft services: $000

POST-PRODUCTION — $15,000
- Editor: $6,000
- Sound design / Mix: $3,000
- Color correction: $2,500
- Music / licensing / composer stipend: $2,000
- Deliverables (DCP, QC, EXPORTS): $1,500

FESTIVALS, MARKETING & DELIVERABLES — $5,000
- Festival submission fees: $2,000
- Poster / key art: $800
- Trailer Edit- $1,200
- Publicist (Short Term) / Photo Shoot: $1,000

CONTINGENCY — $2,000