

Nuts To You

● You've been driving around for a month now with a rattling noise from the back end of your car. Finally, you manage to sneak it into the shop for a quick diagnosis, and your worst fears are confirmed—big bucks. The mounting stud for the rear shock has come adrift. Well, replacing the rear shocks was overdue anyway, so that's no big deal. A new pair of dampers go on and your wallet is somewhat lighter.

Unfortunately, that noise was the loose stud enlarging the hole beyond the ability of the hardware to stay tight. And two days later, it's back. The shop's service manager says it's your fault for waiting so long, and . . . he's right.

He can fix it, of course. He'll have to weld something over the hole. The guy who does the welding is on vacation, and oh-by-the-way-no-warranty. If you want a warranty, they'll have to replace the axle housing—mucho dinero.

Try the coward's way out. A lug nut just happens to have the same 1/2-in. threads. With its chamfered face, it'll usually find a home in that egg-shaped hole, snuggling up tight and staying that way.

