

FALLOUT SHELTER EXERCISE

On a weekend evening you have invited eight friends to your home to talk with a teacher whom you know personally. In the midst of your discussion you hear the air-raid siren. You turn on the TV and all stations are broadcasting an emergency news bulletin: an Islamic terrorist has detonated a “dirty” bomb in your area, releasing harmful biological agents into the atmosphere. Authorities have not identified the contaminants, but they are warning citizens that exposure to outside air and/or water systems can be fatal.

Fortunately, you have a well-equipped fallout shelter in your basement, a remnant from the Cold War era. You direct the teacher, your eight friends, and a mechanic who was fixing your air conditioning unit to go downstairs. You hear some static on a radio, then an announcement directing citizens to immediately proceed to fallout shelters, with a list of public facilities so equipped. It is likely that all those who suffered any significant exposure will die. All persons in shelters are warned that it would be fatal to leave before at least a month. Further bombing is anticipated. This may be the last broadcast you will hear for some time.

You immediately realize that you have eleven persons in a shelter that is equipped with food, water and – most important – oxygen enough to last eleven people two weeks or six persons for a month. The group unanimously decides that in order for anyone to survive five must be sacrificed. As it is your shelter, all agree that you must stay and choose the other five who are to be saved.

- **Sister Mary**, the parochial school teacher, is older than the rest of the group. It is evident to all that she is the one to respect and they recognize her grasp of the situation and her ability to take control. Although she is rather cold and impersonal, she has helped to quiet the group’s nervousness and settled an argument between Dan and Hazel. Even though no one seems close to her, you feel she would be valuable as an organizer and pacifier.
- **Hazel** is studying home economics, nutrition and dietetics. She is very sexy and attractive. One of the first things she did was to appraise the food supply. Her training has taught her how to ration food and avoid waste; she is an excellent cook who can make even canned foods appealing. She is efficient, to the point of being domineering and bossy. Hazel is a habitual smoker, usually going through at least one pack a day.
- **Alberta** is a brilliant woman who has been working in bio-chemical research. She has been pampered all her life and is horrified at wearing the same clothes for a month, being unable to bathe or wash her hair, and sleeping in a room with five other people. Her scientific knowledge of the situation would be an asset; her whims and attitude would be annoying.
- **Latisha** is an English Professor, has read extensively and writes well herself. She has already entertained and diverted the group by retelling a book she recently read. She has traveled to Africa to research her family’s history. She is a single mother of one child, a ten-month-old baby son.

- **Li**, Chang's wife, has a pleasant personality generally. However, she has been the most nervous and upset of the group. Her temperamental and excitable mood is partially due to the fact that she is expecting a baby in two months.
- **Chang**, Li's husband, is a medical student and an officer in the Naval Reserves. He completed his pre-med. degree through the Navy's ROTC program, and is in his first year of medical school. He also has a close association with his mother, who is a doctor herself. You realize he would be a great aid; however, he refuses to stay unless Li also stays.
- **Jose**, the mechanic who had been working upstairs, also has a great deal of practical know-how to recommend him. Although he has no formal education beyond high school, he has had experience with air-filtration systems, air purifiers, and oxygen supply. He is a rather dull, chubby fellow. Hazel has already scolded him for snitching a Nutrition Bar from the limited food supply. Despite his understanding of the technical aspects, he fails to grasp the necessity for self-control as far as food and water supply are concerned.
- **David**, a young rabbi, is easygoing. His calmness, optimism, and faith are an inspiration to the group. In an intangible yet perceptible way his presence is reassuring. He helped quiet Li's tearful outburst. He has learned to remain quiet because he is a diabetic. He would require a special diet and easily becomes tired. Over-excitement causes him to faint.
- **Abdullah** is a clean-cut, husky ex-jock, the former star running back of the hometown team. He was once a member of a violent street gang, but converted to the Muslim faith and has led a devout, peaceful life ever since. He was the only one able to lift the heavy metal plate that had to be placed over the shelter door. At one point, Chang and Jose had a brief scuffle over the oxygen tank valve, which Chang had taken himself to set. A fistfight might have followed if Abdullah had not separated the two.
- **Don** is a gay romantic, and does not discriminate in his affections. He admittedly leads an "alternative lifestyle" and has had both male and female companions. Unfounded rumors suggest that he also engages in recreational drug use and uses dirty needles. His smile, lively guitar music and crazy sense of humor have helped improve everyone's mood. He gets along well with everyone – too well with some of the women. He has already offended Hazel by getting fresh, and several of the ladies have noticed his flirting eyes darting from face to face as he sings.

Which five get to live?