When the Wind Blows

By Raymond Briggs
So long, child
I'm on my way
And after all is done
After all is done
Don't be down
It's all in the past
Though you may be afraid
So long, child
It's awful dark
And I've never felt the sun
I dread to think of when
When the wind blows
When the wind blows
When the wind blows
When the wind blows
Life burns a savage wound
Angry and wrong
Trusting a twisted word
You'll run, run away
You'll take him home
You'll spit and taunt him
But they won't believe you
No matter what you say
So long, child
It's awful dark
I've never felt the sun
I dread to think of
when the wind blows
When the wind blows
When the wind blows
When the wind blows
- Hello, dear.
- Hello, love.
- Did you have a nice morning, dear?
- Oh, all right, thanks.
Rather uneventful.
My life isn't very
fast-moving or dynamic.
Well, you are retired, James.
You do seem a bit down, dear.
Yes, well... I've been reading the papers
in the public library all the morning.
Oh, those things! Full of rubbish.
I never look at them. Except the stars.
We must keep abreast of the international situation, ducksie. Decisions made by the powers that be will get to us in the end. Politics and sport, that's all they're full of. Could affect us all, the... ultimate determent, an' that. They say there may be a pre-emptive strike, dear. Oh, not another strike! It's wicked! I'd have them all locked up. Blessed communists! Well, it all looks pretty umpty. It's not that sort of strike, duck. - Sausages or beefburgers, dear? - Sausages, thanks. It looks as if the balloon could go up at any moment. What balloon? - Mashed or chips? - Chips, thanks. Oh, I don't know. The balloon. Or is it a maroon? I can't remember. What are you talking about, James? It looks as if there's going to be a war, dear. Yes, they say it might break out at any time now. Well, at least you won't be called up, James. You're far too old. Well, thank you, my beloved. I'm still two years younger than you. Well, if the worst comes to the worst, we'll just have to roll up our sleeves, tighten our belts, and put on our tin hats till it's V-E Day again. It won't be like that this time, love. I think this one is called the "Big Bang Theory."
It's all worked out by brilliant scientists. Well, we survived the last one, we can do it again. It'll take more than a few bombs to get me down. Yes, yes, we... we must... must look on the bright side, ducks. - Better go over to Radio 4. - I like Radio 2. Radio 4 is better for the international situation. Good evening, this is Radio 4, with the news at six o'clock this Thursday evening. The Prime Minister, speaking a few minutes ago in the House of Commons, has warned that the international situation is deteriorating rapidly, and that war could break out at any time in the next two or three days. Crumbs! What's the matter, dear? Have you burned yourself? This is it, ducks! This is really it! Another sausage, dear? I shouldn't worry too much. It'll probably all blow over. - Three days! Blimey! Three days! - Language, James! Language! Crumbs! It's lucky I got more leaflets from the public library only this morning. Here we are, see? "Protect And Survive" and... "The Householder's Guide To Survival." Now, this one should be really authoritative. It's printed by the County Council. We'd better commence the construction of a fallout shelter immediately. We must do the correct thing. There's treacle tart and custard or cold bread and butter pudding. - Treacle tart, please. - Fallout?
- I thought they did that in the army.
- No, dear, it's fall in in the army.
Fall in. Thank goodness I got all those official leaflets today.
I gave the others to our Ron.
Suppose I hadn't?
We'd have been totally non-prepared.
I mean, just think!
Will you have to dig a hole, like the old Anderson shelters in the war?
No, dear, that's all old-fashioned.
With modern scientific methods, you just use doors with cushions and books on top.
Where on earth are we going to get doors from, James?
Well... you just unscrew them, dear.
You don't mean off our own house!
Well... yes... dear.
You're not going to ruin the paintwork, James!
Oh, don't worry. I can soon touch it up after the bomb's gone off.
Well, mind you do.
Just you be careful, James!
Mind that paint, James!
I hope you know what you're doing.
I'll put the screws in a plastic bag.
You'll only go and lose them.
Remember, they're in the right-hand jug on the dresser.
It's going to be very draughty with no doors on.
I expect it's a safety precaution.
It'll let the... blast go straight through.
It says here...
"The inner core or refuge should be placed at an angle of 60 degrees for maximum strength."
I should place it up against the wall, if I were you, dear.
Yes, but which are the degrees?
We haven't got any angles.
I think we did it at school. You...
You had angles with degrees in.  
Only I can't remember.  
I think I'll ring our Ron. He'll know.  
Hello, son. All right?  
Beryl and the baby?  
Good. Look, I'm building this  
governmental inner core or refuge,  
and it says, "Place it at  
an angle of 60 degrees."  
Well, what's that mean, exactly?  
It's not cobblers, son.  
It's in the governmental directive.  
You mean you're not constructing  
an inner core or refuge?  
I gave you the leaflets especially!  
But what about baby Jim?  
Don't start singing!  
What do you mean, "We'll all go  
together when we go"? It's not funny.  
No, but it's our duty to carry out  
governmental instructions in time of war, son.  
Stop laughing, will you?  
I'm surprised at you.  
You're supposed to be a  
responsible father now.  
A protractor?  
The angle at the bottom?  
Yes, yes, I see.  
OK, son. Thanks.  
Now, listen.  
Just you start that inner core or refuge.  
It's your bounden duty, son.  
Cheerio, son.  
Now, remember what I said.  
I am your father.  
I do know a bit about war.  
Love to Beryl and baby Jim. Ta-ta.  
Yes... Ron says I need a protractor.  
He says I can get one at Willis's.  
He was killing himself laughing,  
and he was singing songs!  
I can't understand it.  
I think it's nerves.  
He's gone a bit hysterical.
He can't be drunk at this time of day.
Our Ron doesn't drink.
Oh, no, no, no. No, no,
of course not, dear.
Ron is not going to make
an inner core or refuge.
I remonstrated with him,
but he was adamant.
He says if London cops it, he'll cop it.
And not to worry, Dad.
It's an irresponsible attitude.
I'm a bit disappointed in him,
adopting that attitude.
He was always a very responsible
boy when he was in the Cubs.
It was going to that art
college that spoiled him.
He met some dreadful people there.
Huh! Blessed beatniks!
I don't suppose it'll make a terrific
amount of difference, the exact angle.
It'll probably all fall down anyway.
What with the bomb, an' that.
If a job's worth doing,
it's worth doing well, James.
Yes, dear. But it is only temporary.
After all, it'll all
be over in a flash.
Funny to think they were
on our side in the war.
Who, dear?
The Russkies.
With old Joe Stalin.
Yes, he was a nice chap.
I liked him.
Like an uncle, he was.
I liked his moustache and his pipe.
Yeah. Roosevelt was nice, too.
There was three of them.
Churchill, Roosevelt and Stalin.
All good blokes.
With old Hitler, Goering and Musso,
and all that lot, on the other side.
You somehow knew where you were then.
I don't even know who the people are these days. 
I expect it's all done by committees, dear. 
Yes, and meetings. I expect they have loads and loads of meetings, and thus arrive at decisions. 
Commuters, too. 
They all use commuters these days. 
It's got very impersonal. 
Churchill with his cigar, old Stalin with his moustache... 
you knew where you stood. 
Do you think they'll invade? 
Oh, no, no. Won't need to. 
It'll all be done by missiles. 
Long... range. 
Then they'll instil commuters to take charge of us. 
It's funny to think there's no shelters this time. 
We had an old Anderson in the garden. 
I can see it now. 
We had nasturtiums growing all over it. 
And we painted the front green. 
Painted, it looked quite pretty. 
Next door grew cabbages on theirs. 
Yes. We had a Morrison. 
Hm, I used to sleep in it. 
I stuck pin-up girls all over the inside. 
Betty Grable, Anne Shelton, Patricia Roc. 
The roof got all smoky, cos I used to read in bed with a candle. 
Yes, it was nice in the war, really. 
The shelters, the blackouts, cups of tea... 
The ARP, the evacuees. 
London kids seeing cows for the first time. 
Old Churchill on the wireless. 
The nine o'clock news.
- Vera Lynn singing away.
- Worker's Playtime.

Spitfires and Hurricanes in the blue sky over the cornfields.
The White Cliffs of Dover.
Old Jerry coming over every night.
Those were the days.
Don't you dare use my best cushions from the front room!
I'll get some old ones from upstairs.
I'll put them in plastic bags.
I don't want fingermarks getting all over them.
I shouldn't worry too much, love.
They're bound to get dusty with all the fallout coming down.

It says here we've got to lay in food supplies for 14 days.
I'd better put a note out for 28 pints of milk, then.
I'll just pop out and get 14 loaves, dear! And a protractor.
Anything else you want?
I'll need more plastic bags, dear!
There's no bread, ducks! Sold out.
There seems to be some sort of panic purchasing.
It can't be helped, dear.

After all, there is a war on.
Or nearly, anyway.
I hope you haven't left that cape dripping in the hall, James!
Oh, no, dear.
Mr Willis has sold out of protractors.
I expect everyone wants 60 degrees.
He was terrifically kind, Mr Willis.
He cut me out a bit of card with 60 degrees on it. Look.
Oh! Nice, dear.

Here's the emergency supplies, ducks.
Two packets of ginger creams, half a jam sponge, a tin of pineapple chunks and a tin of Christmas pud.
It'll all be over by Christmas.
- You're not decorating now, James!
- We've got to paint the windows white, dear.
- Whatever for?
- It's for the radiation, I think.
Like they do in greenhouses, to keep out the sun. It's the correct thing.
- It won't be that hot, surely!
- Well, I don't know.
They say the one at Hiroshima was equal to one thousand suns.
So it is quite hot.
And besides, the powers that be are making much better ones now.
Science has leaped forward with giant strides. Oops!
Mind you don't get paint on those curtains, James.
You should have taken them down first. You never think.
I know that smile of yours, James.
"Keep doors closed to prevent the spread of fire", it says.
- But you've taken off half the doors, James.
- Yes, dear.
Won't that make the fire worse, then?
Well, I...
Perhaps the blast will blow the fire out.
Well... Hm!
The inner core or refuge looks quite cosy, doesn't it, dear?
I hope those doors aren't marking the wallpaper, James.
Come in and try it out, dear. Please.
Whoa! Careful! Careful!
You'll have it over!
Budge up, can't you, James?
Couldn't you have made it a bit... wider?
It's... It's constructed in compliance with the governmental specifications, dear.
Well, they might have made it wide enough for two people.
- Suppose you were married?
- We are married, dear.

Yes, well there you are, then.
Oh!

What about if you had children?
Where would they go?
Oh, well, you'd just hold them in your arms. They'd soon fall asleep.
Suppose they were 17 or 18?
Big boys with bristly chins and big boots on. Skinheads.
Well, in that case, you'd...
just add a few more doors.
There's... no wall space for more doors.
Oh. No.

Well, our Ron was never a skinhead, anyway.
What on earth are you putting the food in there for?
Well, that's where it's got to be.
But why can't it stay in the larder and fridge?
Because we must not emerge for the 14 days of the national emergency.
You're not saying we've got to stay in that thing for two weeks, are you?
Yes, dear. Ours not to reason why.
Now we must do the correct thing.
Well, what about the cooking, then?
How do I get to the cooker?
We'll just have to use the little picnic stove, dear.
- What about the toilet?
- Well...
Well, we'll have to have a potty, or something.
I can tell you now, James Bloggs, that I am going to go upstairs in the proper manner.
But you mustn't emerge, dear. Not for the 14 days of the national emergency.
All right, then, how are you going to empty the chamber pot?
Well, we just have to empty it down the toilet, I suppose.
- You just said we couldn't go to the toilet.
- Oh. Yes.
Well... Yeah, well, Now, we'd better not cross our bridges till we come to them, eh?
Look on the bright side, eh, ducks?
Six, five, zero, zero, six, ten...
It says here, "Two pints of water per person per day."
I wonder if we've got enough bottles.
I'll have a look under the stairs, dear.
I've measured the water into the bottles, James.
I've labelled them so we don't get in a muddle.
Oh, good. That's nice, dear.
You're very efficient in a national emergency, dearest.
Get on with you!
It says here, "D: Miscellaneous: Salt, tomato ketchup and sauces, pepper, matches, toilet paper, disinfectant, vitamin tablets, tin opener, knives, forks, spoons."
Funny. No plates.
- What's all that, dear?
- I don't know.
It's called "miscellaneous."
Pass it in, please.
- Funny.
- What, dear?
In the governmental leaflet, it says, "Remove thin materials from windows."
And in the County Council leaflet, it says, "Hang white sheets in the windows."
I wonder which is correct.
Oh! It says peanut butter.
We haven't got any. Oh, dear.
Never mind, ducks.
I don't like it, nor do you.
No, but it's on the official list.
Oh, dear.
Now, don't worry, love.
I expect we'll survive without it.
It'll probably go runny
in the heat, anyway.
You get terrific heat with
these bombs, you know.
Mind you, diet is very important.
You are what you... eat.
And the survival of
the fittest, an' that. Whoa!
That's why so many people... are jogging
and eating lots of All-Bran, I expect.
Only the fittest will survive the
outcome of the nuclear holocaust.
They eat lots of beans, too.
They give you wind, beans do.
You certainly shouldn't
eat beans, James.
Let's not get personal, ducks.
I'm trying to have a
scientific discussion.
If there really is going to be a war,
who do you think will win?
Well, the Americans have
tactile nuclear superiority,
due to their IBMs and
their polar submarines.
But in the event of a
pre-emptive strike,
innumerate Russian hordes will sweep
across the plains of Central Europe.
Then the US Technical Air
Force will come roaring in
with their Superhawks, B-17s and B-19s,
bristling with guns! Terrifically armed!
"OK, you guys! Let's go!"
They'd razor the Russky
defences to the ground.
Then the marines would parachute
in and round up the population.
After that, the big generals would
go over... like... Ike and Monty.
Then the Russians would capitulate,
and there would be a condition of surrender.
Then they'd instil free
and fair elections.
One man, one vote.
And women too, nowadays, of course.
And thus, the Communist threat to
the Free World would be neutrified,
and democratic principles would
be instilled throughout Russia,
whether they liked it or not.
That's the world scenario as I
see it, at this moment in time.
- Monty. Wasn't he in the war?
- Well, of course he was.
He practically won it.
You remember, dear.
Big beret with badges on it.
Tanks. The Desert Rats. El Alamo.
But that was ages ago, dear.
Yes, well, I expect
he's getting on a bit.
Probably been promoted.
More likely dead.
Monty dead? Never!
I'll bet he is. It's about
40 years since the war.
And he had a moustache then!
Who's in charge now, then?
Oh, one of those commuters, I expect.
It says here, "Place your
National Savings Certificates,
medical cards and birth
certificates in a box."
Here's a nice box, dear.
I'll give it a good clean-out.
Oh, thanks.
We'd... better keep
it in a safe place.
I wonder what would be a safe place.
Who's in charge of
the Russians, dear?
Oh... it's...
Shavinsky, isn't it?
Or... Molotov.
No. Molotov's just
a cocktail, I think.

Krushef. Yes, that's right.

B and K.
Bulgania and Krushef, that's them.
And that bloke Marx has got
something to do with it.

What are you doing, dear?
Blocking out the windows, in compliance
with the governmental directive.
It's the correct thing.

Yes. Then there's the...
usual committee, of course,
the Common Term, they call it...
the Soviet Supreme.
They're in charge of the BJ Kee.
That's the Secret Service.
SS for short.

Our lot is called EMI-5.
Oh, it's all very complicated, ducks.

Well, mind you don't
scratch the polish!

Is it any good writing him
a letter, do you think?
- Who, dear?
- This leader. BJ Whatthisname.
- What are you going to say, dear?
- Oh, I don't know.

Dear Sir,
Mr B J thing...

We, the people of Britain,
are fed up with being bombed.

We had enough of it last time, with old
Hitler, so will you just leave us in peace?

You live your life
and we'll live ours.

Hope you are well.

Please don't drop any bombs.

Yours sincerely, Mr and Mrs J Bloggs.

Very good, dear. Very nice. Yes.

You might be a bit late for the post.

You know what the
post is like these days.

First class might just get there.
But I must do this list.
"Dustbin, calendar, books, games, paper,
pencils, shovel, spade, crowbar, axe, hatchet,
saw, whistle and/or gong for alarms,
suitcases for furniture
or evacuation,
string, pliers...
first-aid kits, safety pins, scissors,
flints, aspirins, diarrhoea remedy,
tweezers, calamine lotion,
war crisis editions, lice-flea powder,
rodent poison, insulin,
blood-pressure tablets,
rubber gloves, sanitary towels,
mirror, toilet paper, eyewash."
I wonder if it's true
about the paper bags.
Or is it a joke?
I never know if it's
just a joke or not.
What's that, dear?
Well, they say you should get into a
paper bag just before the bomb goes off.
Whatever for?
I suppose it's like the white paint.
It... deflects the heat a bit.
- Sounds silly to me.
- There are some paper bags.
We had spuds from the farm in them.
There should be four.
They'll be filthy, James.
Are you sure your
bag is clean, James?
Yes, dear, I...
cleaned it thoroughly.
You do look silly!
I wonder if it's all
right to have eyeholes.
They say it's the correct
thing to wear white.
People in Hiroshima with patterned clothes
got burned where the pattern was,
and not so much on the white bits.
Even the buttons showed up.
Yes, but they were Japanese.
Is there a clean white shirt, dear, ready for the bomb?
You're not going to wear that nice new one I gave you for Christmas!
I don't want that spoiled.
You can wear your old clothes for the bomb and save the best for afterwards.
All right, dear. Well, is there an old white one, without stripes?
I don't want stripes all over me.
I've never heard such nonsense.
We didn't think what colour clothes we had on in the war.
Lucky to have any clothes at all, with everything on coupons.
We interrupt this programme for an official government announcement.
An enemy missile attack has been launched against this country.
It is estimated that the missiles will arrive in approximately three minutes. Three minutes.
God almighty, ducks!
There's only three minutes to go!
Oh, dear. I'll just put the washing on.
Come back, you stupid bitch, and get in the shelter!
- How dare you talk to me like that, James!
- Shut up and get in!
There's no need to forget our manners just because there's a war on.
Shut up! I'm trying to listen!
Take shelter immediately.
I've never heard such language in all my life.
- For God's sake, shut up!
- Oh, dear! I've left the oven on!
Get in! Get in! Get in!
The cake will be burned!
Lie down. Keep away from windows.
Cover your head and eyes.
Do not look at the sky
or through windows.
Take shelter immediately.
Repeat. % stay indoors.
Do not leave your home.
The cake will be be burned!
The cake will be burned!
Blimey!
- Blimey!
- Well I never!
Well, I... I suppose... that was it.
I should think so.
Blimey!
You all right, dear?
Yes, thanks, love.
Oh, dear.
I do feel all shaky.
Never mind, ducks.
We're... We're still in one piece, eh?
Yes, I think so.
- Wasn't it light?
- Yes.
Terrific.
You get terrific light with these bombs.
- The heat!
- I know.
Phew!
It's still hot now.
I wonder how far we are away from the epicentre.
Or was it the hypocentre?
I can't remember.
What's that, dear?
Well, it's the centre of it all. You know, the... the bull's-eye, sort of.
Bang in the middle. Or...
Or middle of the bang, rather.
I should think we were bang in the middle, dear.
A direct hit.
Oh, just look at all that glass.
No, no, it couldn't have been a direct hit, dear.
We would have sustained greater damage and suffered greater casualties. Don't talk to me about damage. Just look at those curtains! Yes, but it would have been much worse at the epi-hypo thing, dear. I don't see how it could have been much worse. I'll never get them clean. I'll give them a good soak tonight. Blessed Germans! Russkies, dear. Mm! The shelter stood up well, didn't it? I constructed it in compliance with governmental specifications. - I hope the cushions aren't spoiled. - I think some of them blew off in the blast. I do like nice cushions. Yes, but there's more important things at the moment, ducks. And curtains. Cushions and curtains. I'd better get out and put them in soak now. - Stay in! Dear. - Don't you shout at me, James. But it's the whole point, dearest. This is what the shelter's for. But the blessed bomb has gone off already. Yes, but the fallout is falling out now. See? No, I don't see. I can't see any soppy fallout. I'm getting out. - Just look at all that mess! - No. No! We must stay in. We must do the correct thing. Come on, now. It's late. Let's get to bed. Whatever is this box of sand for, James? It had better not be for
what I think it's for.
I've told you what I think
about that subject already.
Bomb or no bomb, Hitler or no Hitler,
I'm going to go to the
toilet in the proper manner!
No, dear, it's not an earth tray.
The governmental directive says
it's for cleaning plates, an'that.
Cleaning plates?
Why shouldn't we wash them properly,
and dry them on a nice clean tea towel?
We washed up properly
all through the war.
Well, it's to conserve emergency
water supplies, dear.
What is the world coming to?
- You see, dear...
- Tuck my feet in.
My old mother would
have a fit if she knew.
- Yes, but...
- Drying plates in an earth tray!
Catch me eating off a
plate covered in sand!
You'd be the first to complain.
Dear...
A bit of grit in your winkles and you're
spitting and splattering all over the place.
Tomorrow, you can put that thing outside
for someone's cat, where it belongs.
Ooh-er!
I'm getting fed up stuck in this thing!
I want to get out and tidy up!
Just look at all that mess out there!
We must do the correct thing, dear.
We must remain in the
inner core or refuge.
Ours not to reason why.
Our but to... something or other.
It tells you about this problem in the
County Council directive. I'll show you.
Let's see. Where is it?
Ah, yes. Here we are.
"During this period, reduced external stimuli may produce problems of group behaviour."
Oh, yes, I see, dear.
"Steps to combat this may include the following:
At intervals, stimulate group activities."
Don't you dare start stimulating, James!
I'm not in the mood.
No, dear!
It means discussions, an' that.
It says, "Discussions, card games, story-telling, quizzes, etcetera."
Perhaps we'd better try story-telling.
You tell me one.
No, I can't. I'd feel funny.
You're not a baby.
- Well, pretend I am.
- Don't be silly.
- Go on.
- No.
You tell me one.
- I don't know any.
- There you are, then.
What about a quiz?
- I spy with my little eye...
- Oh, not that. It's childish, James.
Or it says here, "Discuss the changed conditions after an attack, and consider how to overcome or adapt to them."
Well... let's start on that one, dear.
Who's going to start the ball rolling, eh?
Shall I kick off, eh? Eh?
Right. Here goes.
I think... we could overcome the changed conditions after an attack by... all pulling our weight, putting our shoulders to the wheel, so that we all pull together, now that our backs are against the wall. And we can show these Jerries...
I mean Russkies, 
just what we think of them. 
And... Well, that's all, I think. 
Hooray, James! 
You ought to be a politician. 
It says, "Reading aloud to 
pass the time is a good idea." 
It's a good job I got this 
book from the public library. 
It's called "Armageddon And You." 
There's a terrific bit in it 
about Western defences. 
Now, just listen to this. 
"There are three B.M.E. Ws... 
Ballistic Missile Early 
Warning systems. 
One P.R.C. S... Perimeter Acquisition 
Radar Attack Characterisation System. 
Then there's N.O.R.A. D... 
And J.S. S... 
Joint Surveillance System. 
And then seven R.O.C. Cs... 
Regional Operation Control Centres. 
Then there's N.A.D.G. E... 
Nato Air Defence Ground Environment, 
and several A. W.C. S... 
Airborne Warning and Control Systems. 
All this is controlled by the N.C. A... 
National Command Authority, 
by means of the N.M.C. S... 
National Military Command System. 
And A.M.C. C... 
Alternative Military Command Centre. 
And N.E.A.C. C... National Emergency 
Airborne Command Centre. 
And it all comes under W. W.M.C.C. S... 
Worldwide Military Command & Control System. 
We should be all right with that 
lot looking after us, eh, ducks? 
Well, it didn't stop them 
from bombing us, did it? 
Oh... well, no... 
I suppose not, really.
Still, just think,
it might have been worse.
Got to look on the
bright side, ducks.
Besides, another thing the powers
that be have created is called M.A.D.
- Mad?
- Yes, M.A.D.
M.A.D. Mutal Assured Destruction.
I read about it in
the public library.
I think my old dad was in the
Mutual Assured Insurance.
- A penny a week it was, in those days.
- This isn't insurance, ducks.
I think it covered the
cost of the funeral.
Yes, well, I suppose this is similar.
It all comes out of our taxes.
He had a lovely funeral, our dad.
You don't pay any taxes now.
You're retired, James.
No, I'm fully paid up.
My funeral is fully assured.
Time we went to bed.
It's getting dark.
I'll sleep in my clothes.
It's an all-out war situation.
I might be called out in the
night for an emergency.
They may need all able-bodied
men at short notice.
They'll soon change their minds when
they see your pot-bellied little body.
Morning, dear.
- How do you feel?
- Oh, dear.
- I ache all over.
- So do I.
I've got a terrific headache.
Oh... I still feel so tired.
Never mind, ducks. It's probably shock.
The bomb, an' that.
Oh, it's bound to upset us a bit.
After all, you don't get a nuclear bomb every day of the week, do you?
Just as well. Never knew a bomb could give you headaches.
Oh, yes, ducks. I told you these bombs have a terrific effect on all sorts of things.
Right. A nice cup of tea will perk you up.
Funny. They've cut the water off.
Still, that's logical.
It might be contaminated.
It's a wise precaution for the protection of the population.
Use the bottles, dear.
Oh, yes, of course.
The emergency reserve supplies.
Most of them seem to have been broken in the blast, dear.
The contents have been dissipated.
Funny. The electric's off, too.
Still, bound to be.
Conservation of energy resources.
A wise governmental precaution during the period of national emergency.
Good job we've got that little picnic stove, eh, dear?
Are there any aspirins?
Mind it doesn't pop,
James. I can't...
bear it when it pops.
Mm!
Nothing like a cup of tea, hm?
Crumbs! I must be dreaming.
The news! We're just in time.
No. Nothing. There's nothing.
All dead.
- What about the telly?
- Yes, of course.
They may have filmed it all.
We may see our bomb on the news.
No. All dead.
- No picture?
- No.
- Not even just the voices?
- No! Nothing.
- All dead.
- All dead?
- We'll have to wait for the paper.
- There should be some good pictures.
These bombs are quite spectacular.
- He's late already.
- Yes, well, that's logical.
There's bound to be delays and shortages during the period of national emergency.
I'll miss the serial on Woman's Hour.
It was just getting interesting.
Crumbs! I haven't tried the transistor.
No. Seems to have packed up.
Or probably needs new batteries.
Yes, I must pop down to Willis's.
They are a price these days.
97p last time. Just fancy!
We ought to get one of these new hi-fis when your endowment policy comes up.
Oh, yes. Or a stereo.
I've only got two years to go.
- I hope Ron and Beryl got back all right.
- Oh, yes, they'll be all right.
- Our Ron's a very careful driver.
- I didn't mean the driving so much, dear.
More the bomb.
I'll give them a ring.
Hello? Hello? Hello?
No, it's not even ringing.
Oh, I expect the lines are down.
They say there are red-hot winds of 500 miles an hour.
I expect that would render the lines inoperable.
I'll drop him them a line...
tell them to give us a ring.
- Do you think the post will be going?
- Oh, yes, bound to be.
The powers that be will endeavour to maintain communications.
Remember the Blitz?
The post went on just the same.
It's government policy. It keeps up the morale of the population. I hope Ron is insured.
You did pay ours, didn't you, James? Oh, yes, dear. The bomb won't cost us a penny. We'll be well covered.
Mm. Lovely.
We can have some nice new curtains for the summer.
Crumbs! I wonder if it's all over already.
If it is all over, I wish I knew who'd won.
We can't have lost the war, can we, James? We won the other two.
No, of course not.
Remember old Churchill?
"We will never surrender."
Yes, but Churchill's not prime minister now, dear.
No. Well... of course not.
I suppose it won't be the same without... with old whatshisname, will it?
Who is it, anyway?
I must check the emergency supplies list.
We never had time to finish it.
It says here, "...a notebook for messages."
Who are you going to write messages to, dear?
Well, you never know. There's always a need for vital messages in wartime.
Our lives might depend on a vital message getting through to headquarters.
Oh, I see, dear.
And it says, "...a whistle and gong for alarm."
Oh, what will you do with that, dear?
Well, if I saw a Russky coming down the lane, I'd bang the gong. If we had one.
- Wouldn't he shoot you, dear?
- What, just for banging a gong?
He'd be well within his rights to
shoot you if there's a war on.
Oh, crumbs! You really think so?
Just for banging a gong?
- I'm glad we haven't got a gong.
- We've got a whistle.
- Have we? Where is it?
- I'm not sure.
Hm. Never mind.
Let's leave it. Let's leave it.
Oh, I do feel tired.
Really exhausted and... all dizzy.
Nervous exhaustion due to
unaccustomed lifestyle.
That's what that is.
How's your headache, dear?
Just the same, thanks.
Aspirins didn't seem to do any good at all.
I think I've got a temperature.
I feel all hot and shivery.
You do look pale, dear.
- I should have an early night.
- I must clear up.
Suppose someone comes and sees the place
in this state? We might have visitors.
Yes. The Emergency Service
should arrive today.
I'm surprised they've
not come before.
I expect they've got a lot
of people to attend to.
Oh, yes. We're only
an outlying district.
They'll be heavily engaged
within the stricken area itself.
- Will it be like meals on wheels, dear?
- Yes, I should think so.
There'll be mobile canteens
and soup kitchens,
teams of doctors and nurses,
helicopters flying in blankets
and medical supplies.
It'll all move slowly
into action, you bet.
They'll all be here
in next to no time.
The governmental authorities have been
aware of this eventuality for years.
So continency plans will have
been formulated long ago.
We won't have to worry about a thing.
The powers that be will
get to us in the end.
I hope they come soon, dear.
I'm not feeling very well.
I wonder if we'd have been
better off in the cellar.
Oh, no, dear. Too damp.
Think of my rheumatism.
- Would you like a bite to eat, dearest?
- No, thanks.
I'm right off food.
So am I.
I must go to the toilet.
And I don't want any arguments.
Blessed dust everywhere.
Oh, crumbs! I forgot!
We're supposed to stay in
the inner core or refuge!
Well, it's too late now.
We've been out for ages.
Oh, blimey! It was the whole point!
I wonder if there's
any radiation about.
Well, I can't see anything.
Hurry up, dear, and get back
in the inner core or refuge!
We'd better have an early night.
Well, if you can't see
it and can't feel it,
it can't be doing you
any harm, can it?
Better try and...
eat something today, dear.
I was sick three times in the night.
My headache's even worse.
Let's have a walk round
the garden, dear.
I've just read it's only 48 hours in
the inner core or refuge, not 14 days.
A bit of fresh air is all we need.
I'll get a nice lettuce.
Crumbs! Look at the door!
The paint's all gone.
Scorched down to the wood.
Never mind, dear.
You said you'd burn it off one day.
The leaves have all gone
off the apple tree, ducks.
Oh, yes! What a shame!
Still, it'll be lovely in the spring.
It is spring, dear.
Oh! Listen!
A dog!
Oh, poor thing!
I expect he's hungry.
The heat has affected
the hedge, love.
- The beans look a bit shrivelled.
- And I think the lettuce have evaporated.
Well, they do have a
high water content.
- Can you see any fallout falling out, James?
- No, the sun is trying to get through.
They didn't blow up the sun,
thank goodness.
Oh, no, dear.
Science is still in its infancy.
What does the fallout
look like, dear?
I don't know. The...
government directive
neglects to mention how the
populous could recognise it.
I expect it's a bit like snow, ducks.
Only greyer.
The grass looks a funny colour.
Yes, I'll pop down to Mr Sponge's tomorrow
and get some bone meal and dried blood.
He might be closed due
to the bomb, dear.
What, old Sponge? Miss a day's trade?
Not him! He'd rather die!
It's very cloudy. Almost foggy.
We need some sun to
bring the garden on.
- The milkman's not been yet. He's late.
- Oh, well, that's logical.
He's bound to be a bit
late after the bomb.
Perhaps he's been called
up to fight, or something.
Oh, yes. Well... maybe.
But they'd have got a
woman or something.
- Quiet, isn't it?
- Yes.
I haven't seen no trains. No traffic.
I expect they're all having
a good lie-in after the bomb.
Terrible smell of burning.
Oh, yes. Well... bound to be.
That's logical.
It's like... roast meat.
Yes! Roast dinners.
I expect people are having their
Sunday dinners early this week,
due to the unexpected circumstances.
The road's gone all funny.
Seems to have melted a bit.
I expect that's why the milkman's late.
He's got stuck somewhere.
I wonder if there's a proper war on.
I wonder who's winning.
Never mind. It'll all
be in the papers, dear.
Come to think of it, he's late, too.
He missed us altogether yesterday.
Well, you can't expect things
to be normal after the bomb.
Difficulties will be experienced throughout
the duration of the emergency period.
Normality will only be assumed after
the sensation of hostilities.
Oh, dear. I think I'm
going to be sick again.
There, there, there, ducks.
All better now?
I had the most terrible
diarrhoea this morning.
Nerves, dear. It's just nerves.
I'm the same, and I'm a man.
Let's sit in the garden for a bit.
Don't you think we ought
to clear up, dear?
Yes, yes, later on.
I feel a bit... weak and dizzy.
We'll make a start soon.
Well, suppose Jerry
comes this afternoon.
No, they'd wait for the fallout to clear.
Too dangerous for a few days.
We've got plenty of time.
The situation is well
in hand, you bet.
Our boys will be lying
in wait for 'em.
I expect they've laid a trap.
Jerry will walk straight into it.
Hello! There's cloud coming up.
Looks like rain.
It's raining! I'm going in.
Rain! Yes!
We can save it!
Don't you get wet, James. You'll catch
a chill. We don't want you laid up again.
We'll be all right for water
now for a while, dear.
Do you think rainwater
is all right to drink?
Oh, yes, of course it is.
There's nothing purer than rainwater,
is there? Everybody knows that.
Perhaps I'd better boil it.
Best to be on the safe side.
Oh, yes, I suppose so. We don't
want to take unnecessary risks.
It may prejudice our
chance of survival.
What do you mean, James?
We have survived, haven't we?
Yes, I know. But after the bombs on Japan, people died ages later. I... forget exactly why. Perhaps they didn't take precautions. Yes. I expect they neglected to do the correct thing and...

Oh, and anyway, that was years ago. Science was in its infancy. We're better equipped to deal with the situation in the light of modern scientific knowledge. Oh, yes. Nowadays, there's bound to be all sorts of antidotes and protectives. When the medics get through, they'll probably just spray us with some antidote, give us a couple of pills, and in no time, we'll be as right as rain. I'm glad we moved to the country when you retired, dear. Yes. Much more peaceful. If we'd still been in London, we'd probably have been bombed out by now. Yes. Unless we'd been evacuated. Oh, that was only children. And women too, of course. I'd have been requisitioned for essential war work. But you're far too old. You're retired. Yes, but all age groups are pressed into emergency service during times of national emergency, dear. I'd have been an air-raid warden. Or a stretcher bearer for the Red Cross... and St John's Ambulance Brigade, or a fireman in the docks. Jerry up above, fire bombs raining down. Up the turntable ladder. Carrying women to safety. Trust you to think of that, James.
I wish we had neighbours.  
I'd like to ask someone  
what's going on.  
Well, I warned you, dear.  
"This cottage is a  
bit isolated," I said.  
"You're not going  
to like it," I said.  
I wish we didn't have to stay put.  
I quite fancy a pint.  
I said I'd see old George down the  
Half Moon today for a game of darts.  
I expect he'll be busy with  
his cows after the bomb.  
It might have put them off laying...  
milking, I mean.  
Yes, it may have curdled  
the milk, or something.  
These bombs have a  
terrific effect on things.  
He may have switched over to yoghurt.  
Yes. Lots of people's lives are going to  
be considerably affected by the bomb.  
London Airport will have  
been knocked out, I expect.  
Yes. Bang goes a lot of  
people's holidays this year.  
The Yanks won't come dropping in.  
Oh, no. Not unless to help  
us against the Russkies.  
Remember in the war?  
"Got any gum, chum?"  
We used to stand on  
the railway embankment,  
and the Yanks used to shower us with  
gum and chocolate and K Rations.  
Terrific, it was.  
I wonder if the Russkies chew gum.  
"Got any gumski, comrade?"  
You won't be able to say that, James.  
They're the enemy.  
Oh, yes. I keep forgetting.  
Crumbs!  
We won't have to try
and kill them, will we?
Oh, I... I suppose so.
That's what you're supposed
to do to the enemy, isn't it?
Crumbs! I hadn't really
thought of that.
You mean to say if one of them comes
through that door this afternoon,
I'm supposed to try and kill him?
Well, not you, James.
After all, you're retired.
Well, what would I kill him with?
A bit of old iron, I suppose.
I must mend those
socks for you, James.
They'd have Tommy guns.
They always do.
He'd mow us down, Hilda!
If a German sees you in these socks,
he'll think you're just a peasant.
"Die, you Englishe
pig dogs!" he'd say.
"Enemies of der Fatherland!
Heil Hitler!"
Oh. Oh, no, sorry. No, no,
that's the last time.
I keep forgetting,
it's the Russkies now.
Just suppose that one did come.
A great big Russian.
Big overcoat, great big
boots with snow on them.
Great furry hat, all covered
in belts of ammo and grenades.
Bloomin' great Tommy gun
pointing straight at us!
What am I supposed to do?
You could offer him a
cup of tea, I suppose.
Argh!
We mustn't be collaborators, Hilda.
They'd shave our heads.
Russians like tea. A cup of
tea wouldn't hurt, surely?
I suppose it's better than being mown down in a hail of bullets. 
Crumbs! They might round us up and take us off to the concentration camps. 
Why? We've not done anything. 
We're not Jews, or anything. 
- Your grandfather was a Jew. 
- He was not! 
Well, only partly. 
They'd send us to Liberia. 
Down the salt mines. 
- Whatever for? 
- I don't know. 
They always do. 
Perhaps Russians eat a lot of salt. 
I expect they're quite nice, really. 
I saw the Russians dancing on telly once. 
All in boots. 
They seemed nice. 
Oh, yes. I bet some of them are nice. 
There were supposed to be some nice Germans last time. 
I think we're running out of water again, dear. The rainwater's all gone. 
Oh, we've still got a pint of milk. 
Better save that for teatime. 
I can't bear tea without milk. 
- Posh people have lemon in it. 
- I know! Horrible! 
Crumbs! 
I wonder if it was an American missile falling a bit short. 
That happened in the war... 
blokes getting shelled by their own guns. 
Be funny if it was an American missile that had landed on us. 
Wouldn't it, dear? 
I can't see it's very funny, James. 
No, well... 
Funny peculiar, I mean. 
Are they worse than the Russian ones? 
Oh, I shouldn't think so, love. 
I expect they're all much of a muchness.
They all work on the same principle. It's called... megadeath, I think. So many millions of people dead per bang. Any ketchup, dear? I expect the quantity is similar either way. Are all the bangs about the same size, then? Oh, no! There's one megaton, and 10 megaton, an' that. It's... just a question of how big a bang you want to make and how many... people you want to kill. More baked beans, dear? No, thanks. I'm a bit off food. Then there's the... overkill, see? That's where they kill more people than they really need to. Say you want a bang big enough to kill one million people, and you go and use a three-million-people bang. It's terrifically wasteful of energy, in the present economic climate. I see, dear. Yes, there's one thing about the present economic situation. - I mean... - Such a shame we can't wash up. ...in order to conserve world energy resources, the powers that be will only use the smallest possible bang. Oh, I can't bear it! I expect that's why we're still here. We're running out of crockery. We could say we owe our lives to the world economic procession. Put the kettle on, will you, ducks? There's no water, dear. Oh, no, no. Of course. Just... Just have to have milk, then.
That pint's gone bad, dear.
The fridge has been off.
Oh, heck! Well...
...a black coffee, then.
There's still no water, dear.
Well, what... What are we going to drink, eh? Eh?
What... What... What are we going to drink, for God's sake?
Don't shout, dearest.
I'm sorry, love.
I'm just... terribly thirsty.
How about a nice sweet, dear?
It's a blackcurrant fruit pastille.
There's only one left.
- You have it.
- No, you have it.
We'll... We'll cut it in half.
That's... That's fair.
- Help!
- I'm coming! I-I-I'm coming! I'm coming!
A rat! A rat!
A rat in the lavatory!
Eeww! I saw it!
Its tail waving in the pan!
Never mind, dear. Never mind.
No, no, no. It won't hurt you, dearest.
The pan's all dry and its...
head was round the bend...
just its bottom end sticking out. A tail!
Oh! A tail!
Horrible! Horrible!
There, there, dear.
Don't worry, I... I'll pop down to Willis's in the morning and I'll get some warfarin.
At least it shows that the drains aren't blocked.
Oh, dear!
I do feel queer!
All shaky.
Well, it's bound to upset you a bit.
The... The bomb, I mean.
Have you got... lipstick on, dear?
Lipstick?
What do you mean, James?
You know I haven't
worn lipstick for years.
- Well... your lips are all red.
- Oh!
Oh, my!
My gums are bleeding!
I thought there was a...
a funny taste.
Well Shrinking of gums, causing ill-fitting
dentures. That's... That's what that is.
Yeah... Better get to the dentist
when the emergency has rescinded.
There was blood when I went
to the toilet this morning.
Yes, yes. Me, too.
P-piles, that is. H-hovaloids.
A common complaint in...
in middle-aged people like ourselves.
I'll... I'll pop down to... to the chemist
when the crisis pales into insignificance,
and I'll... I'll get some
of those suppositories.
Oh!
Oh, dear.
I think I'm going to be sick.
Now, there, there, ducks.
There, there. There, there.
Now, now. All better now. Now, please.
Don't upset yourself, love.
Please, please. Now, don't dry.
Don't cry. Don't cry.
I expect it's due to the vibration,
you know. Like that day in the car.
You remember that time we
went to Bournemouth, hm?
And you were sick in the coach.
Don't worry, ducks. Don't worry.
There can't be anything
wrong with you.
I expect it's... it's just the...
the after-effects of the bomb.
Oh, I... I... I do...
fancy a nice cup of tea.
Do you think the cows have been
affected by the bomb, dear?
No, I... I shouldn't think so.
They're... They're all
out in the country.
Supplies of milk will be maintained.
It is... essential for the maintenance of...
healthy bones and teeth.
Yes, but we live in
the country, dear.
Yes, yes, yes, I... I know, dear.
Well, the grass is
all dead and funny.
Yes... well...
I don't know.
I expect there may be...
a temporary containment of supplies.
I suppose we'd better just sit
here and wait for help to arrive.
Yes. The... The emergency services
will have sprung into action
at the first alarm signal.
I hope they get here
before the enemy.
Oh, I... I hope Beryl and
Ron got back all right.
Oh, they'll... they'll be all right.
They'll... They'll have been safely
home long... long before the bomb.
Our Ron's... a sensible boy.
At the first siren, he'd get the whole
family down to the shelters right away.
There aren't any shelters, dear.
Oh, no.
No, no, I... I forgot.
But he'll... he'll be all right.
I gave him the governmental leaflet.
He'll... He'll be
all right with that.
That will afford him the maximum
protection available to the populous.
He'll... He'll take cover immediately
and... adopt all the prescribed precautionary measures.
He... He's no fool, our Ron.
He's not likely to get hot under the collar.
He... He won't go to pieces.
The whole family will... will stick together.
Oh! Look!
There's funny spots on my legs.
They're various veins.
That's... That's what that is.
That's... That's a common complaint amongst... amongst the middle-aged segment of the populous.
Oh, that's... that's... that's nothing to worry about.
They don't look like veins to me.
I don't like the look of it.
Oh... Oh, you are... you are a baby!
You're a worn... worn... born worrier, you are, you know.
Now, you just try and look on the bright side, eh, ducks? Hm?
Look! Look!
I've even got funny blotches on my skin, see?
And I... I'm a man.
Yes... Yes, too much tinned food.
That's all that is.
Yes.
Pilchards never did agree with me.
I must put some skin lotion on those spots.
Yes. Oh, they'll... they'll soon clear up.
I'll pop down to the chemist... chemist in the morning.
I'll get some... get some ointment.
Yes.
We could do with some lozenges or pastilles, too.
- I've still got a terrible throat.
- Yes, so have I.
I wonder...
if they'll be able to
sell us some water.
I'm going to have an
early night, James.
We could do with a good long
rest after that blessed bomb.
Oh, yes, yes. It's bound to take
it out of you, a thing like that.
Yeah, it's a... it's a
shock to the system.
Oh, yes. I expect so.
Oh!
Look!
My hair's coming out!
Don't... Don't worry, dearest.
Don't worry, don't worry.
Women don't go bald. No!
That's... That's a scientific fact.
Shall we get into those
paper bags again?
Well, whatever for, dear?
Well, you never know.
There might be another
one while we're asleep.
Well, I... I suppose it...
wouldn't hurt.
It... It would be a...
a sensible precautionary m-measure
in the... in the...
in the circumstances.
After all, really, this is
an all-out war situation,
and... Well, I mean,
another I... IBM... might...
might come over.
Oh, it's stuffy in these bags.
Yes.
Now you know what it
feels like to be a potato.
I should hate that,
being buried in the ground.
Oh, yes. Yes, so would I.
- Give me... cremation every time.
- Oh, me too.
We'd better just stay here and wait
for the... emergency services to arrive.
Y-y-yes. Yes, they'll... they'll take...
they'll take good care of us.
We won't have to worry about...
about a thing.
Just... Just leave
everything to them.
The governmental authorities...
will know what to do with us.
The powers that be...
will get to us in the end.
You have got the box with our medical
cards and birth certificates, haven't you?
Yes, dear, yes.
They're quite safe.
Shall we pray, dear?
- Pray?
- Yes.
Oh, crumbs. Who... Who to?
Well, God, of course.
Oh... Oh, I see.
Y-yes. If you think it... it... would be...
would be the correct thing. Hm?
- It can't do any harm, dear.
- OK.
Here goes.
Dear... sir...
No, that's wrong.
Well... How... How...
How do you start?
Oh, God...
Our help... in ages past?
That's it. Keep it up.
Almighty and most
merciful Father...
Oh, that's good.
Dearly beloved,
we are gathered...
u-u- unto thee...
I shall fear no evil.
Thy rod... and thy staff...
comfort me
all... the days...
the days of my life.
L-Lay me down... in...
in green pastures...
I... I can't remember any more.
That was nice.
I liked the bit about
the green pasture.
Oh, oh, yes, yes.
Into the valley of the
shadow of death...
No more, love.
No more.
Rockabye baby
On the tree top
When the wind blows
The cradle will rock
Oh, babe
Hate to see you fall that way
Better speak to the
powers that be today
Hey Joe, where you goin'
with that gun in your hand?
You can take your revenge
But you'll still feel bad
There must be more to
life than lucky strikes
And some unlucky ones
And folded flags and pipes
And drums
I stood in the wings with you
Our lives in the hands
of a second-rate actor
Holding the high ground
Of some old stage
Oh, babe
How do these jaded
stars get so far away?
Will they catch what
the moral had to say?
Hey Joe, where you goin' with
that dogma in your head?
You can prove your point
But your kids will still be dead
Bring down the curtain
This soap opera must surely close
Before the cold wind blows
Hey Joe, where you goin'
with that gun in your hand?
You can take your revenge
But you'll still feel bad
Bring down the curtain
This show must close
Before the cold wind blows
So rockabye baby
On the tree top
When the wind blows
The cradle will rock
There must be more to
life than lucky strikes
And some unlucky ones
And folded flags and pipes
And drums