

Dr. William "Bill" Stockton-A Doctor who has the foresight to build a nuclear shelter

Grace Stockton-Dr Stockton's fearful wife

Paul Stockton-Dr Stockton's son

Marty Weiss- A flamboyant, immigrant, neighbor

Moria Weiss- Marty's Wife

Jerry Harlowe- A loudmouth neighbor, William's best friend, tries to see reason but reason doesn't always see him

Martha Harlowe- Jerry's wife

Frank Henderson-A rash, hot-headed neighbor

Mary Henderson-Frank's wife

John-A neighbor

Radioman- the military radio informant

RADIOMAN:

RADIOMAN. Direct from Washington, D.C. Repeating that: Four minutes ago, the President of the United States made the following announcement. I quote: "at 11:04 PM Eastern Time, both our distant early warning line and ballistics early warning line reported radar evidence of unidentified flying objects, flying due southeast. As of this moment, we have been unable to determine the nature of these objects, but for the time being, in the interest of national safety, we are declaring a state of yellow alert. The Civil Defense Authorities request that if you have a shelter already prepared, go there at once. -If not, use your time to move supplies of food, water, and medicine to a central place. Keep all windows and doors closed. We repeat: If you're in your home, go to your prepared shelters or to your basement.

WILLIAM/PAUL/GRACE:

WILLIAM. You got all the canned goods down, Paulie?

PAUL. Yeah, all I could find.

GRACE. How about the fruit cellar, Paul?

PAUL. I put those in too.

WILLIAM. Now, go up to my bedroom and get my bag and put that in too.

PAUL. What about the books and stuff?

GRACE. PAUL! Your father told you to get his bag.

WILLIAM. There's time, Grace. There's plenty of time. And we'll need books and things. I don't know how long we'll have to stay down there. What about the light bulb. Where do you keep the light bulbs?

GRACE. Oh, on the top shelf here of this cupboard, Bill. Oh, we don't have any. I ran out. Well, I was going to buy some at the store yesterday because there was a sale on and... Oh, Bill, I'm talking like some idiot. Now, how much more time is there?

*The two embrace.*

WILLIAM. There's no telling, Grace, honey. Conelrad says from the first alarm we might have anywhere between fifteen minutes and a half an hour.

GRACE. Fifteen minutes?

WILLIAM. I'm just winging it, Grace. I don't know for sure. I don't think anyone does. Now keep filling them.

GRACE. Bill? There's no more water.

WILLIAM. It doesn't make any difference anyhow. I think we've got enough water. You bring a jug with you, Gracie. Paul and I will get the rest.

*The family goes into the shelter.*

JERRY/WILLIAM/FRANK/MARTHA:

JERRY. (Tapping on his glass) Ladies and gentlemen. Ladies and gentlemen, may I have your attention please? Now no birthday celebration is complete without an after-dinner speech.

WILLIAM STOCKTON. Oh-no Jerry.

JERRY HARLOWE. And so, let's get to the business at hand, the honoring of Dr. William Stockton.

WILLIAM. Now, Jerry Harlowe you sit down.

JERRY. Who today is one year older and admits to being over twenty-one and who, in the short space of 20 years has taken care of not only us, our children, but even our grandchildren.

MARTHA. Whose grandchildren?

JERRY. As a matter of fact, I doubt if there's a single person in this room who still does not owe the good doctor a visit or two.

FRANK. What about the hammering at all hours of the night? That's another thing we owe him for.

JERRY. Ah, yes, yes, the good doctor's bomb shelter. Well, I'm afraid we'll have to forgive him for all that despite the fact that what the doctor thinks of as farsightedness on his part has been a real pain in the neck to the rest of us, what with all the concrete trucks and the nocturnal hammering and all the rest of it.

FRANK. That's better.

JERRY/MARTY/FRANK:

JERRY. Frank, wait a minute. We can't all fit in that bomb shelter. We'd be crazy to even try.

MARTY. Why don't we pick out one family, draw lots or something?

JERRY. What difference will it make? I keep telling you, he won't let anybody in.

FRANK. Well we could all go down there and tell him he's got the whole street against him. We could do that.

JERRY. What good would it do? I keep telling you, even if you break down the door, we can't all fit in that bomb shelter. We'd be killing everybody and for no reason.

MARY. If it saves even one of my kids, I call that good reason.

MARTY. Jerry. Jerry, you know him better than any of us. Your his best friend. Go down there again. Talk to him, plead to him, tell him to pick out one family. We'll draw lots or something.

FRANK. One family? Meaning yours, Marty, huh?

MARTY. Why not? I've got a three month old baby.

MARY. What difference does that make? Is your baby any more precious than one of my kids?

MARTY. I never said that. Look, if your going to argue about who deserves to live more than the next one-

FRANK. You shut your mouth, Weiss.

JERRY. Take it easy, Frank.

FRANK. Let go. Thats the way it is when the foreigners come over here. Pushy, grabby, semi-Americans.

MARTY. Why, you garbage-brained idiot.

*Frank makes an attempt to attack Marty, Jerry pulls him away.*

WILLIAM:

WILLIAM. Normal? I don't know. I don't know what normal is. I thought I did once. I don't anymore.

JERRY. I told you we'd pay for the damages, Bill.

WILLIAM. Damages? I wonder. I wonder if any one of us has any idea what those damages really are. Maybe one of them is finding out what we're really like when we're normal. The kind of people we are just underneath the skin. I mean all of us. A lot of naked, wild animals who put such a price on staying alive that they'll claw their neighbors to death just for the privilege. We were spared a bomb tonight, but I wonder. I wonder if we weren't destroyed, even without it.

FRANK/JERRY/WILLIAM/JOHN/MARTY/MORIA

FRANK. Bill, Bill Stockton. You've got a bunch of your neighbors outside who wanna stay alive. Now, you can open that door and talk to us and figure out with us how many can come in there, or you can just keep on doing what you're doing and we'll bust our way in there.

JERRY. Bill, Bill, can you hear me? This is Jerry. They mean business out here.

WILLIAM. And I mean business in here. I've already told you, Jerry. You're wasting your time. You're wasting precious time that can be used for something else like figuring out how you can survive.

JOHN. Why don't we get some kind of battering ram?

FRANK. Yeah, we could go up to Bennett Avenue. Phil Klein has some heavy pipe in his basement, I've seen it.

JOHN. No, No, that would get him into the act, too, and who cares about saving him. No, No, if we do that we let all those people know that we have a shelter on our street, we'd a whole mod to contend with, a whole bunch of strangers.

MARY. Sure, and what right have they got to come over here? This isn't their street. This isn't their shelter.

JERRY. Oh. Oh, this is our shelter, huh? And on the next street that's another country. Patronize home industries. You idiots, you fools, you're insane, all of you.

MORIA. Maybe you don't wanna live, Jerry. Maybe you don't care.

JERRY. I care. Believe me, I care. I want to see the morning sun come up, too. But your acting like a mob and a mob doesn't have any brains. You're proving it by what your doing.

FRANK. I say let's get that battering ram and we'll tell Klein to keep his mouth shut as to why we want it.

MARTY. Now wait a minute. Wait a minute. I agree with Jerry. We should stop and think a minute. Now I think-

FRANK. Nobody cares what you think, you or your kind. I thought I made it clear upstairs.

MARTY. Yes, but I think that Jerry-

FRANK. I think, I think, I think the first order of business is to get you out of here.

*Frank punches Marty in the face. He falls to the floor.*