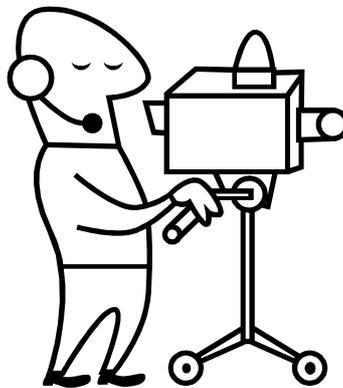


# Focus Group

**A semi-LARP RPG Scenario for 3-8 Players**



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## **Introduction**

*Focus Group* is a roleplaying game scenario, designed to be played within a three hour time-frame. The game uses pre-generated characters, and would suit either tabletop style roleplaying or a semi-LARP style. Before running the game it will be necessary for one player to read through all the game material, including all the character sheets, and act as the Gamesmaster (GM) or Referee.

The main conflict in the game is the players versus the scenario, but some character versus character conflict has been written into some of the pre-generated characters. Extra characters have been included to allow for some choice on the part of the GM or players - the game has been put together for one GM and anywhere from 3 to 8 players. Those characters not taken by players may be run as NPCs.

The tone of the game is intended to be tense and serious, with some moments of comic relief built in. Of course, tone is set by the collaboration of GM, players and material, so there is a vast range of outcomes and styles of play which could be produced.

This scenario was written as part of the Kapcon Scenario Design Competition for Kapcon XV.

## **Scenario Premise**

In this scenario the Player Characters (PCs) are a cross-section of average Americans, brought to the BCNCB studio to view a new programme. They are to give their opinions about the show as part of the network's research. The PCs do not know what the show is beforehand, and have not yet received much in the way of instructions. They are being paid for their time, and some of them have the day off work in order to be here (those with full-time jobs).

## **What's Really Happening**

This is a focus group for a presidential response to a terror attack on the USA. The PCs will be shown the start of a TV show, which will be interrupted by a fake emergency broadcast. Some of the people in the focus group and all of the staff of the studio are actors. It will appear to the PCs that America has been taken over by terrorists. The president will address them via a TV broadcast to the nation – it is this that the PCs must eventually give feedback on. To up the ante, the ‘emergency’ that the president is talking about will escalate. It will become apparent that the terrorists are in fact a fifth column of spies, working for extra-terrestrial forces. It is the end of the world, and the president has to address the nation.

## **Complications**

There are a number of ways to increase the tension. Having one of the PCs actually be a terrorist, or UFO nut, or similar extreme personality will increase tension amongst the players. Having one of the actors take his role too seriously and actually kill someone will likewise add to the terror. Having a coincidentally timed real alien invasion would also be very, very complicating. The basic scenario contains most of these elements, with the prospect of a real alien invasion being discussed as an appendix. Elements may be modified or removed as suits individual GMs.

## **Sequence of Events**

The PCs are led into the building, asked to sign a non-disclosure agreement (NDA), and taken to the viewing room. They are shown the start of a TV show (*Breaking Point*, a high school drama). The show is then interrupted by an ‘emergency broadcast’, where a newscaster warns of numerous terrorist attacks. Gunfire is heard outside, and terrorists burst into the room. They shoot one or 2 members of the focus group, and detain the PCs in the room. The president makes an initial broadcast. There are further explosions outside, and the terrorists go to investigate. The PCs may investigate, or may stay put. News broadcasts are seen about an alien invasion. Blurry pictures are shown of massive devastation. The president makes a final broadcast. Actors dressed as aliens break into the building, and begin 'killing' people. The PCs either fight back or hide. There is a blackout, then the truth is revealed and feedback forms are filled out.

## **Scene One - Introductions**

The game begins with an actor playing a TV Executive (Simon Green) greeting the focus group, and showing them into the studio building. There are no external windows in the building, as they film TV shows here and are very concerned about controlling the environment within the building. There are TV screens *everywhere* inside the building. The focus group is led to a viewing room near the centre of the building, in the first basement level. A non-disclosure agreement is explained, and the focus group is asked to sign. This is very important, and it does feature one or two irregularities, so any character who closely scrutinises the agreement may notice this (it refers to National Security in one sub-section).

The focus group then has a few minutes to get to know one another whilst the viewing is being set up. Players should be encouraged to talk here, and the NPCs in the focus group should be introduced. Of course, everyone but the PCs are actors, and their job is to be believable characters, and to make the PCs care when they are shot and killed by the 'terrorists'. Several of the NPCs in the focus group are rigged with squibs and other special effects devices to make the terrorist takeover more believable.

## The Show

Simon Returns to the screening room to tell the group about the show they are about to watch. He is very excited about the show, and is very slick and enthusiastic:

*OK, thanks again for coming in today and sharing your valuable opinions with the network. We really want to fine-tune all of our shows to make your viewing experience as pleasant and fulfilling as possible. The feedback you give us today is a vital part of our network's commitment to providing you with the best television in America.*

*The show you're going to see today is an exciting new show called *Breaking Point*, a gripping drama about life in a suburban high school. You'll see real teenagers, showing you what life is really like in high schools today, and you'll see teachers striving their hardest to make a difference. This is no rich kid, Beverly Hills high school show, and it's no inner city urban nightmare, it's about the suburbs, about middle America, about how hard it is to grow up or work in a normal town. It's about people struggling to find out where they belong and what they can do to make a difference. It's about people reaching their breaking point, or helping to stop those breaking points from being reached. You're gonna love this, but hey, don't take my word for it – watch the show, and remember you can write down anything you want on those feedback forms. Enjoy the show!*

The lights go down, and Simon leaves the room. A BCNCB logo appears on the screen, then the show starts. Music starts to play. It is a mix between electronica pop and rock guitar music. Young people in suburban costumes turn toward the camera, some smiling, some grim. Serious looking adults sit behind desks with large piles of marking, then look up at the camera with a concerned expression. A teenage boy punches a dent into his locker. A young looking teacher sits in her car in the school parking lot, gripping the steering wheel with white knuckles, a tear rolling down one cheek. The title – *Breaking Point* – flashes up across the screen. With a jarring drum clash, the credits end, and the show begins. We see an English class, studying *The Catcher in the Rye*. Students discuss Holden's view that all adults are 'phoney's',

whilst their enthusiastic young teacher sits on a desk at the front of the room and nods vigorously.

## **Things Start to Go Awry**

If the players wish to discuss the content of the TV show, suggest scenes or ask questions, they should feel free. You may want to develop the TV show further, describing the pilot episode in detail. If your players are suitably enthused, they may wish to participate in describing the show in all its awful High School Drama glory. They should also be encouraged to write down their characters' responses to the opening of the show. It won't be long, however, before things start to happen to disrupt the screening. To begin with the characters will hear noises from outside the room which may (or may not) be of concern:

- Shouting in a distant part of the building
- Running footsteps
- Thudding sounds, with accompanying vibration of the floor
- Firecrackers going off somewhere in the building

The noises will escalate, culminating in a fistfight/shootout outside the door to the viewing room, between 'terrorists' and studio security. If the characters have not left the room by this stage, the terrorists will enter and begin threatening them.

### **Concerning the Terrorists**

The pentagon aides who organised this focus group had lengthy discussions about the identity of the terrorists – some felt that Middle Eastern terrorists would be most effective, others were fans of the *Die Hard* series and felt that German terrorists would be scarier. In the end, a compromise was reached, and the actors playing terrorists in the building were hired solely on experience and ability, without regard to ethnicity or accent. Thus the terrorists form a mixed group, and any accent is fine. They have all either had military, police or similar experience, or they have played policemen and soldiers on the stage and television. None are recognisable actors, for obvious reasons.

## Confronted by Gunmen

Two terrorists armed with machineguns will kick in the door of the viewing room and hold the focus group hostage. They are loud and aggressive, but their goal is to collect the group as live hostages, so they will avoid fatalities. They have been told that they are to act as convincing terrorists, and that the government is willing to compensate the focus group for any minor injuries that are sustained in the preservation of the illusion of emergency.

To minimise the chance of members of the public 'playing hero', the terrorists have instructions to shoot one hostage immediately. A textiles worker named Marcos Defuego is in the focus group, and is wired with squibs. He will attempt to flee, and will be shot by the terrorists. A third terrorist will come running, and will drag away the dead body (leaving a trail of blood). The actors have workshopped the scene, and had the following as their starting script:

Terrorist One (Hans): All right you scum, nobody move a muscle! We have taken control of this facility, and you are now our prisoners!

Terrorist Two (Achmed): That's right. No sudden moves, no heroics, and you might survive.

Marcos (hostage): Don't listen to them man, remember what happened on 9/11? Those guys cooperated, and they're all dead now!

Terrorist Two (Achmed): Shut up, you stupid American. We have a goal here, a plan, and if you let us carry it out, we might not have to shoot you.

Marcos (hostage): I can't take it man, I'm not gonna die today!

*Marcos runs to the door and attempts to escape. Hans and Achmed fire short machinegun bursts at Marcos. He falls down dead. NOTE: Marcos' entry squibs are all in his back, exit at the front – make sure you shoot him from behind, preferably in the doorway.*

## Focus Group as Hostages

The next section of the game features the PCs as hostages. The sound of gunfire and explosions continues, though they sound distant (outside the building). The terrorists will smoke cigarettes, and refuse to answer questions. There are 3 more people wired with squibs if they need to make an example out of someone.

Their story is that they are a cell of an international terrorist network, and that they have been activated. They don't know the big picture – only that their terrorist organization is dedicated to bringing about the downfall of the United States of America.

Time should be given for paranoid conversation, desperate plotting, and despair. If it looks like players are lost or are getting too excited about their plans, move on to the following broadcast:

### Presidential Broadcast One

The TV in front of you flickers into life. You hear the national anthem playing quietly. It also echoes in every corridor in the building. An 'emergency broadcast' logo appears on the screen. The terrorists spit derisively at the screen as an American flag appears. The image dissolves, and you see the President of the United States of America sitting solemnly behind his desk in the oval office.

*“My fellow Americans, I hope this message is reaching a goodly number of you via the emergency broadcast system, and that God is watching over each and every one of you. Sadly, I must inform you that our great nation is under attack. Reports are coming in of attacks around the country on military and civilian targets. This is a massive, coordinated terrorist attack. They have cut off many lines of communication, forcing us to activate this blanket broadcast emergency service. I urge you, my fellow Americans, to be brave in these trying times. Know that we are doing everything we can to defend America, to keep America free. Be brave, be patient, and be vigilant. Terrorist agents could be anywhere, could be anyone. With strength and determination, and the will of God, we will survive this*

*calamity, and America will show its true colours. God bless you, and keep you safe.”*

The screen fades to the stars and stripes once more, and a text version of the President’s speech starts to scroll across the bottom of the screen.

The terrorists are unimpressed. Within a minute of the broadcast, Achmed’s cellphone will ring. He answers in Arabic, talks briefly, then hangs up. He whispers something to Hans, then they both run out of the room.

## **Free Run of the Complex**

Though the goal of the President’s office is to measure the success of his emergency broadcasts, they were obliged to hire a director to get all the actors and special effects sorted. The director felt that the whole scenario would be more believable if the focus group were able to leave the room for part of the time. To this end, she orchestrated a diversion for the terrorists, giving the focus group an opportunity to explore. Their movements will be limited somewhat, and there are a number of set-pieces the director wishes the group to encounter, as follows:

### **The dead body in the cupboard**

A fake body of the actor playing Marcos has been placed in a janitorial closet. There is a smear of blood on the floor leading up to the cupboard, where the body is propped atop a bucket, broom and mop. There are bullet holes in the body, and three fingers have been cut off his left hand (a gruesome detail added by the special effects house). The blood on the body is fake, but has had flavouring added to give it a bitter tang (rather than the sweet golden syrup base that it is made from). The fake body will stand up to a close visual inspection (it is gruesomely detailed), but if anyone touches/moves the body, its fakeness will become apparent.

### **The security guard on the phone**

Hiding behind a desk in an office is an actor playing a security guard named Jeff Wayans. As the PCs near, he starts talking loudly to the person on the other end of the phone:

*“What do you mean they killed Joe? They came to the house? Ma, I gotta tell you that the studio has been taken over. They rounded up all the other guards and Ma – I don’t know if any of us are coming home.”*

The guard’s job is to give ‘information’ about what’s happening in his home neighbourhood. There is an actor on the other end of the phone playing his mother, and she will talk to a PC if they insist. The story is that a group of punks rioting in the streets pulled her husband Joe into the street (from the garage) and beat him to death. There had been explosions nearby, including the police station. Joe was out fixing the car, getting ready to leave town until things calmed down. There are riots and terrorists in the streets, and the police can’t stop them.

The phone will go dead after a couple of minutes, and the security guard will break down into tears. He has had a nervous breakdown, and will be of little further use to the PCs.

### **The Live Newsfeed Room**

There is an abandoned control room, with half drunk cups of coffee sitting on desks and phones dropped to the floor. A wall of TV screens dominates the room, and on each screen a different scene is playing. They are selections of ‘live’ feeds, showing smoking ruins, gun battles between police and unseen assailants holed up in buildings, riots on urban streets, emergencies across America. The tapes are triggered from the complex control room by the director, and will run for 5 minutes before power to the room is cut. Some of the images have place names scrolling across the bottom of the screen (Pennsylvania, Washington etc.), others are image only.

### **Presidential Broadcast Two**

Wherever the PCs are in the complex, every screen in the building flickers into life, and the national anthem begins to play again. There is a mesmeric quality to the broadcast, and all feel a compulsion to watch it. Again, an image of the American flag dissolves into the Oval Office. The President is visibly shaken, his hair slightly out of place, his tie loosened. He takes a deep breath before speaking to the camera:

My fellow Americans. God bless us all. Further information has come to light concerning the spate of attacks across America. My fellow Americans, I have to tell you something that may come as a surprise or a shock – we are not alone in the universe. Information has come to light that proves the existence of life from outside our solar system. We are not alone, and we are not without enemies. My fellow Americans, citizens of Earth, it grieves me to have to tell you that the terrorists currently causing so much woe in our country are a secret fifth column of agents for an alien invasion force. They will be here soon, and we do not know if we will be able to fight them. I urge each and every one of you to look to your own safety, gather what food and medical supplies you can, and to band together to protect our Mother Earth. There may be dark days ahead, and I pray that God keeps you all safe.

## **Aliens Attack!**

The screens will all go blank immediately after the broadcast, and the ground will shake as an 'explosion' goes off nearby. The president has funded a well produced fake invasion, including special effects, sound effects, even a series of sonic devices much like sub-woofer speakers to shake the building. The actors playing aliens are all ex-military, and are elaborately costumed. The following is a sample description, and will be used throughout the remainder of the scenario:

*You see a bulky shape, hunched over and perhaps the height of an eight-year-old child. The creature is clearly not human, but is bipedal and roughly humanoid in shape. It is powerfully built, with large claws and huge, dark insectoid eyes. It is either wearing some form of chitinous armour plating, or it is growing plates of exoskeleton to cover itself. Its body is a mix of greens and browns, and on its head is a large single horn jutting from its forehead. It is carrying a large, bulky weapon, with an opening at one end of about six inches in diameter. The creature's sharp talons clatter and scrape on the ground as it walks, and it has a long, lizard-like tail that swishes back and forth behind it.*

It was decided that the aliens should carry weapons capable of incapacitating members of the focus group, in case of emergencies. The bulky weapons they are carrying are multiple charge stun guns (tazers). They have been customised to fire up to 6 shots, using wire-connected darts which are detachable once the victim is incapacitated. They have been decorated to appear alien, in a bio-mechanical style. The actors are all proficient in hand-to-hand combat, though their movements are restricted by their costumes. They are able to stand up straight with some effort, though they have been trained to move and stand in a hunched over pose. They have mics and earpieces in their suits, with small speakers to make alien noises when they talk (to cover their own voices for the audience).

### **Problems With The Aliens**

Unfortunately some members of the alien squad are not well adjusted individuals. There are 5 aliens, with the following traits:

- Peter McKellan (ex-marine) - Peter has been working in personal security for the past 3 years. He is very *cautious*, and *level headed*.
- Chris Hipgrave (ex-CIA) - Chris spent many years in Afghanistan, and has developed a *cruel* nature. He is also *jumpy* and *violent*.
- Jessica Jordan (ex-marine) - Jessica is the smallest member of the squad. She is *patient* and somewhat *sadistic*.
- Blair Checkmate (ex-mercenary) - Blair has been mocked about his name since he was a child. As a result he is *frustrated* and a *bully*. He is very keen to try out his tazer-rifle.
- Sean Wilson (ex-navy) - Sean is a *by-the-book type*, with a very *task-oriented outlook*. He wants to do the job right, which means scaring the hell out of the targets without hurting any of them.

### **Alien Invasion Events**

There will be a pitched battle in the entranceway between the terrorists and the aliens. The front doors burst inwards, and an alien invasion craft blocks the door off. A

hydraulic door opens and 6 aliens emerge. The 'craft' is of course a prop, but it is very solidly built. It is not possible to move the craft or get through its walls with anything short of C4 explosives.

If possible, the battle will be staged with some of the PCs watching. This may not be possible, but the battle will be dragged out if the PCs look like they might go to take a look. There will be fake blood and aggressive hand to hand combat. Two aliens will stand back with weapons raised, while the others close in for close combat. It is likely that some real blood will be spilt, as Hipgrave and Checkmate get a little too into their roles.

Once the aliens have control of the entranceway, they will broadcast a kind of demented whale-song through the whole building, and begin to move through the corridors. They know where the PCs are (they are listening to the surveillance team on their ear-pieces). They will stalk the PCs and attempt to scare them.

### **Dead Aliens**

The special effects crew have prepared six alien corpses. One will end up in the entranceway, shot by terrorists. Jessica Jordan, the patient sadistic ex-marine will wait in the vehicle, concealed, with her corpse on display. If her hand is forced she will repel PCs with scare tactics and stun weapons. The others can be deployed around the station as needed, moved into position by the other aliens.

### **Scanner Devices**

The military have opted to use this situation to test some experimental devices. They have a new kind of scanner / probe that they want to use to check buildings for life signs. It has been jokingly dubbed the 'spidey sensor', as it resembles a spider in shape and movement, though it is about the size of a Chihuahua. The effects crew have dressed these sensors to look biomechanical, and they have been unleashed in the building. At least one will find the PCs and attempt to scan them using infra-red and sonar scanning. It will attempt to remain concealed, but it is likely that the PCs will spot it. It is a very creepy looking critter, but is not capable of moving much faster than walking pace.

### **This Can't Be The End!**

The climax of the staged events is scripted as the focus group being cornered and menaced by the aliens, one of the actors in the focus group being shot, and the lights going down and all sound ceasing. This may have to happen in small groups, but the 6 aliens will try to round up all the remaining members of the focus group. For this to be successful in the game, it is probably best to have one of the actors in the focus group 'knocked out' early in the scenario. He or she can then rejoin the group (hopefully with a cheap scare as they jump out of a cupboard or air vent), just before the aliens attack. Thus they can be freshly wired with squibs and such.

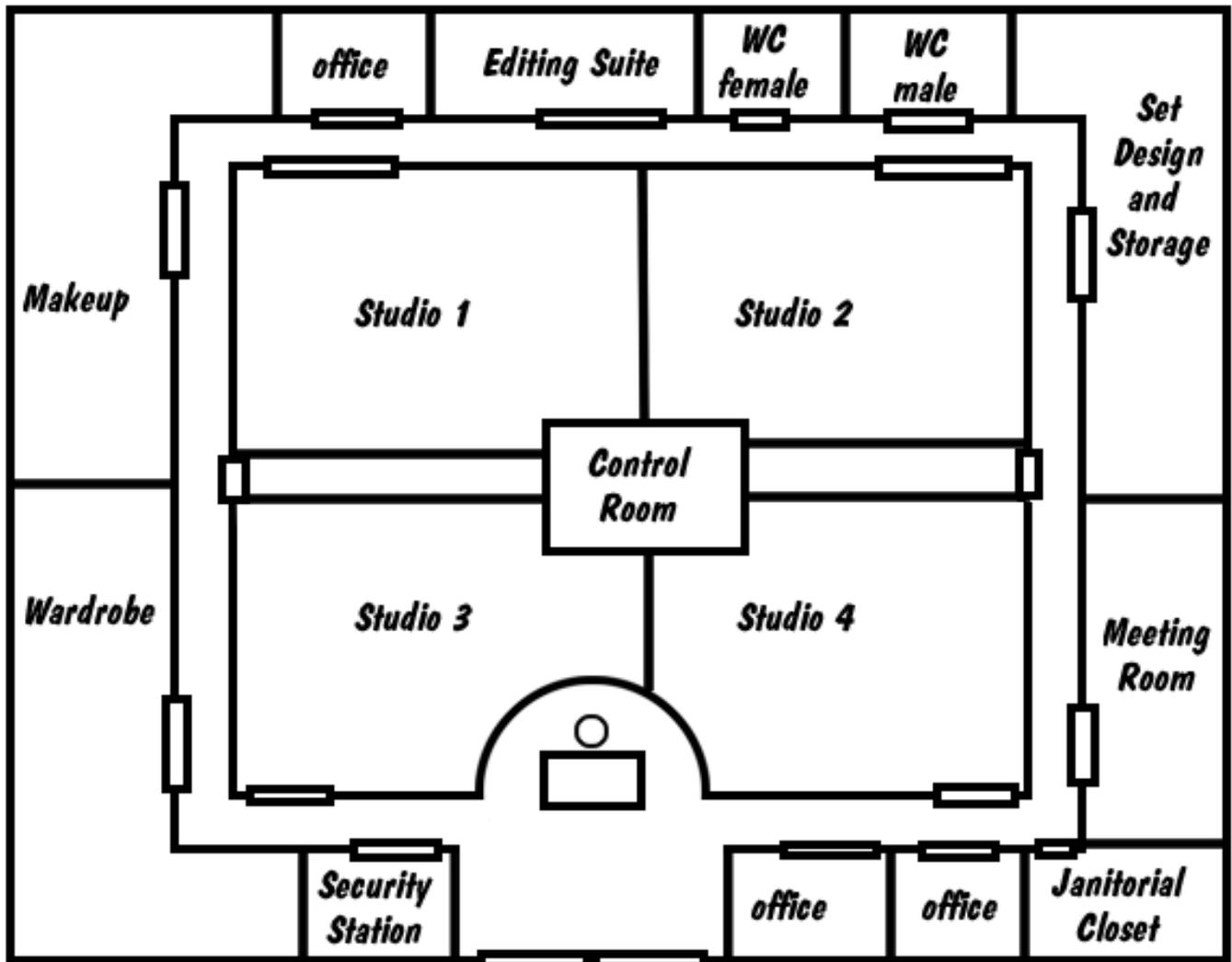
When the lights come back on, the aliens will remove their masks, Simon Green will return with clipboards and pens, and will invite the players to fill in feedback forms. This is the end of the game, and players should feel free to offer feedback in character, and to complain or boast out of character about the events of the game, and to what level they were 'fooled'.

Of course, the script and the scenario may not match the reality of what happens, but that is what's intended.

### **Appendix - A real alien invasion**

If you are running a real alien invasion, then there will be real explosions as UFOs vaporise city blocks in order to land a small invasion force. The aliens will then proceed to move from building to building, eliminating anyone who their scanners perceive as a threat. Unfortunately for the PCs, there are lots of armed guards and 'terrorists' in the building with them, as well as guys in alien suits. The aliens will move to attack the building, starting with the main entrance, then moving through. The appearance of the aliens, and their exact strength, is entirely up to you, as are the reactions of the fake aliens and the security guards inside. Whatever happens, whether the PCs heroically save the Earth or are vaporised by evil ETs, it should be a mess of fun.

**Floor plan of the studio:**



***BCNCB Studios, California***

**Name:** Simon Coggy

**Traits:** Smooth, Dishonest, Handsome

**Sample Quote:** *"Hey baby, if you ever need representation, just look me up. I'm a cougar in the courtroom."*

**Appearance:** A well groomed man in his late twenties, he is reasonably handsome and has a good build. He has sandy blond hair, is clean shaven, and is dressed in a smart-casual style.

**Background:** You work as a desk clerk in the accounts receivable section of a large law firm. You process forms, send out reminders, and occasionally do photocopying for cases. You absolutely *love* to watch legal movies and TV shows, and you dream of being a lawyer. You dress like the lawyers you see at work, and you practice movie-style concluding remarks and objections in front of the mirror. When you go out to clubs and bars, you tell women that you *are* a lawyer at your firm. You even had some business cards made. Unfortunately, you've failed the entrance exam at more than 5 different law schools. You keep studying, but you're starting to doubt whether they'll ever let you in.

**Goal 1:** Convince a pretty lady that you're a lawyer (a *real* lawyer)

**Goal 2:** Try to find a producer and give them your number (you could play a lawyer on TV!)

**Goal 3:** Do something dashing, to raise your self-esteem and profile

**Name:** Mary Cleeves

**Traits:** Fastidious, Moral, Alcoholic

**Sample Quote:** *"Really, this is all too shocking! If you will excuse me I must just go freshen up."*

**Appearance:** An immaculately dressed and coifed housewife, carrying a large, heavy looking handbag.

**Background:** Mary is a leading member of her church choir, and a devoted follower of Martha Stewart. Her husband is the head of commercial banking for a medium sized bank, and she has two teenage children (a boy and a girl). Mary has very high moral standards, and tends to be quite judgemental. In the past few years she has begun to drink during the day, and late at night when her family is asleep. Though she has not admitted it to herself, Mary is an alcoholic, who always carries a small bottle of liquor in her handbag, and takes nips regularly to get through the day.

**Goal 1:** Find convenient times to slip off and take a drink

**Goal 2:** Prove to yourself that you're a good person by finding fault in others

**Goal 3:** Find out what the signs of being an alcoholic are, not that you are one.

**Name:** Bradford Mapplebeck

**Traits:** Paranoid, Whiny, Clever

**Sample Quote:** *"You do realise that we're being monitored almost every second of our lives, and that the NSA has a file on every one of us **from birth.**"*

**Appearance:** A thin and pale young man, perhaps in his late teens, perhaps his early twenties. Bradford wears an X-Files t-shirt and a green anorak, and has a slightly hunched posture. He smiles a lot, in a slightly disquieting way.

**Background:** Bradford has been interested in conspiracy theories and aliens ever since Junior High. He was a member of the Mathletes team, and tried out for the chess club. Bradford is now 19, and lives in his parents' basement. He believes that he has been contacted by the CIA twice (through mysterious notes in his library books), that his room has been bugged three times, and that he will be contacted by aliens before his 21<sup>st</sup> birthday. Bradford is a cheerful and outgoing geek, who doesn't quite realise that not everyone wants to hear about the Illuminati or Nessie.

**Goal 1:** Convince someone that the CIA is after you

**Goal 2:** Find conclusive proof that aliens are real

**Goal 3:** Find a fourth player for your Unreal Tournament LAN party next week

**Name:** Tom Jones

**Traits:** Tough, Agile, Crafty

**Sample Quote:** *"If you make one joke about my name, I will snap your neck."*

**Appearance:** A tall, well built man with a chiselled jaw, piercing blue eyes, and wavy, sandy hair. Tom wears a sweater and comfortable slacks, with tan hiking boots.

**Background:** You work as a used car salesman in a car lot in California. You'd love to own the place some day, and to have a wife to come home to. As long as she was a good Muslim like you. You find that people make all sorts of assumptions about you, that you're American, that you're Christian, just because you look the part. You are actually Swedish, though you have lost the accent. It does occasionally surface when you are under a lot of stress, but you're pretty good at keeping it under control. Your religion isn't usually an issue, but you keep it to yourself these days, to avoid the hassle of being accused of being a terrorist. You do have one secret though - you don't have a green card. Part of wanting a wife is that you would be able to stay in America legally if you were married. Then you could get an IRS number, and make Mr Jenkins at work pay you a full salary, instead of the cash payments he gives you now, with a percentage going into his pocket every day.

**Goal 1:** Find a suitable American wife

**Goal 2:** Stay out of stressful situations - you don't want your accent slipping

**Goal 3:** Find out what kind of car everyone drives, and whether they're thinking about upgrading.

**Name:** Fez Gomez

**Traits:** Swarthy, Brave, Imaginative

**Sample Quote:** *"That's a very nice peecture, meester. In my country we don't have nice cameras like that - mainly we have the donkeys."*

**Appearance:** A handsome, if slightly short, exchange student. Fez wears tight fitting clothing, and always seems to have a hat of some sort on. He has a pencil thin moustache across his top lip, and is too young to realise that he is too young to grow it properly.

**Background:** You are living with an American family called the Dawsons, and you are having a great time in America. Most Americans know nothing about you home country of Belize, so you can make up just about anything you like about your life back home. You are in fact a pretty normal teenager; you like downloading music off the internet, shopping at the mall, and playing soccer. However since coming to America you've built up a story about your donkey Pedro, and how he was stolen by drug barons, and how you had to carry water from the village well every day. Somehow it seems to help you chat up American girls, though you haven't gotten past first base yet.

**Goal 1:** Get past first base with an American girl

**Goal 2:** Find someone to tell your amazing story to (especially hot girls)

**Goal 3:** Do something dashing, to raise your self-esteem and profile

**Name:** Jerome 'NightFox' Oswald  
Fast

**Traits:** Crazy-Eyed, Paranoid,

**Sample Quote:** : "Well, I don't know anything about that, I mean, why should I? I'm just a normal guy, just like you, or you, or even you..."

**Appearance:** A thin, slightly short man wearing slightly outdated, nerdish clothing. Oswald carries a courier bag, which he clutches close to his chest, and has wide, staring eyes which tend to set people on edge.

**Background:** Jerome believes that he is on a mission from God. He has heard God speaking to him late at night, out of the television. God tells him that the world is dirty and corrupt, and that special people like Jerome are needed to make it clean again. Jerome knows that one day he will have to blow himself up -he just hopes it isn't too soon. Jerome feels a burden of loneliness, being one of God's chosen, and he tries to compensate for this by being outgoing and friendly. He sometimes wonders whether God might let him off the whole suicide bomber thing if he got a girlfriend.

**Goal 1:** To do God's work by making the world a cleaner place

**Goal 2:** To meet nice girls, and convince them to go out with him

**Goal 3:** To find another of God's chosen soldiers, to share his burden with

**Name:** Beth Waters

**Traits:** Beautiful, Wholesome, Deadly

**Sample Quote:** *"As a future voter, I believe that chastity and gun ownership are the cornerstones of a strong America."*

**Appearance:** Beth is a beautiful young woman who holds her head high, has an unwavering gaze, and has all the confidence and poise of a self-assured Christian and NRA member. She wears smart jeans and a loose-fitting sweater, and has her hair pushed back with a white headband.

**Background:** Beth grew up in Kansas, and moved to California a couple of years ago. Her family is devoutly Christian, and Beth believes that a love of God is the basis for any successful life. Her ambition is to be the first female president of the National Rifle Association, and she is an active member and campaigner in California. Beth hasn't told anyone, but recently she was at a friend's house, and people were drinking beer and smoking pot. Beth didn't approve, and was going to leave, but Brett Bretterson, the hunky quarterback, was there. She stayed, and when he offered her a beer, *she took a sip!* Beth is now very worried that people will find out about her alcohol abuse, and is even more worried that *it was fun*. Beth fears that she may stray off the path of righteousness, especially if she's being led by Brett.

**Goal 1:** Stay on the path of righteousness, no matter how many cute boys are around

**Goal 2:** Find someone to whom you can confess that you are tempted by Satan

**Goal 3:** Further the agenda of the National Rifle Association – the freedom to own guns!

**Name:** Sam Saunders

**Traits:** Plucky, Curious, Stable

**Sample Quote:** "We've got to get to the bottom of this!"

**Appearance:** A well dressed young person, with blonde hair and light brown eyes. Sam dresses in a casual-business style, and always has a pen and notebook. Sam's eyes are alert and bright. Sam always appears attentive.

**Background:** Sam would love to be a real reporter, maybe working for the New York Times or 20/20. Unfortunately, opportunities were hard to come by in Sam's home town of Pickwanee. So Sam moved to California, and has been scraping together a living from freelance jobs. If only a big, juicy story would come along!

**Goal 1:** Find a big juicy story to really get your career going

**Goal 2:** Make some friends –you've been a little lonely since you moved

**Goal 3:** Try to study people's body language –you've heard that an ace reporter should be able to detect a lie just by looking at how the person reacts to the question.