
What Would Happen During A Nuclear Fallout

Have you ever wondered what would happen during a nuclear fallout? If just 100 nuclear weapons were dropped from the skies? If that day ever came, an estimated 14,535,000 people, roughly 2 percent of the world's population would perish from the blasts with no remains to bury or ashes to spread; nothing left of them except for their "nuclear shadows" imprinted upon the ground. Soon after the initial blasts, 10 billion pounds of soot would begin to rise into the atmosphere reaching the stratosphere in about 50 days and covering the entire planet. If that were to happen, a nuclear winter would befall the earth. Precipitation would not be able to reach the stratosphere making it impossible for the spot to be washed away. The sediment would make the ozone layer deteriorate at an alarming rate; so much so, a person would only be able to stand outside unprotected for 6 minutes without suffering from severe sunburn.

Along with this, the earth's temperature would drop about 1.25 degrees Celsius. While that doesn't seem very significant, a single volcano erupted in 1816 sending soot into the atmosphere causing the earth's temperature to drop .5 degrees Celsius. Nonetheless it was dubbed "the year without winter" as crops, and cattle died along with 200,000 Europeans. If the earth's temperatures dropped 1.25 degrees Celsius, the majority of crops and animals around the world would die out which in turn would cause the global production of crops and cattle to cease. If this were to happen, the earth only holds enough food to feed the entire population for two months, after which 1 billion people would die of hunger; 13% of the population simply wiped off the face of the earth. "This is the way the world ends, not with a bang, but a whimper" (T.S. Eliot, *The Hollow Men*).

Ten years after the nukes are dropped, when the majority of the population has died from the cold temperatures, starvation or by being killed by one another, the winter will slowly start to clear. The soot will fall down from the sky above, and the temperature will begin to rise again; but at that point, what would be left of humanity? You could say that the world had ended the moment the first nuke hit the earth. You could say that we had all just given up hope. Or, you could say that where we stand is not destroyed. We are not in ruins, but in something longing to be built. Something waiting to begin anew. From these ruins of a past civilization we can rise and create something extraordinary.

The crumbling walls around us are not a representation of our past failures, but a reminder of the lessons we have learned. So we continue on. Not because we want to, but because we need to. One of the revelations of this new age of exploration is that the earth is finite and lonely, tucked away in our own little corner of the universe. The earth as we know it is a single organism, and an organism at war with itself is damned.

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