

little brother ... two

I **went** first, and **my choice was** the two youngest boys, **aged** nine and seven. I am sure that child psychiatrists would be **appalled, explaining** that this was **a mean thing to do**. They would blame all the boys' future criminal behavior on the moment when their father **voted to** kick them out of the house. But I **gave up worrying about what** psychiatrists **may** think a long time ago.

It is not that I don't like my two youngest sons. **In theory**, I like them **as much as** a father should. **It is just that, at** the moment, they **cause** me more trouble than anybody else in the household, with their **constant** shouting and **fighting** and **demands for** attention. **Life** would be **an awful lot more peaceful without them around**.

My wife went next, nominating me and the nine-year-old. I **would like to think** that **the reason** she chose me **was because my being gone** would **make the least difference** to the household, **since** I am there less than anybody else. Or perhaps she was punishing me **for suggesting** the game. **You never know** with wives. It's **definitely a worry, though**.

She **picked** the nine-year-old because he is **going through a bad phase** at the moment: noisy, **rude, defiant** and **stubbornly** refusing to do his homework.

George went next, nominating the nine-year-old (**for** all the reasons **stated above**) and his 13-year-old brother. I knew that he would pick him, because the 13-year-old is **by far** the nicest, most **sweet-tempered** and helpful of the boys - and that **has always driven George up the wall**.

Then it was the 13-year-old's turn. He **chose to** nominate George, which didn't really surprise any of us **as** his older brother **constantly** beats him up. He also **thought** we would **do well to** kick out the nine-year-old, like **everybody else so far**.