

Two people, a man in his early thirties and a woman in her early twenties are sitting at a small card table. Their clothes are in shambles. The world has been destroyed, they are the only two left. A radio sits on the lone table, along with a chessboard and a chess timer clock.

A very, inappropriately, cheery radio DJ is talking.

RADIO DJ

And we finally have the counts in. Yes. Yes it looks like six billion, just over six billion people. Dead. Vaporized. Gone. People, just plain gone. That just about does it for us here, humanity I mean, no more homo-sapiens. It's been a good run. Lots of fun. But, dbec dbec debe That's all folks!.... This has been a recording.

Test pattern tone plays until WOMAN turns off the radio. They stare at each other across the chess table. They are at a loss as to what to do. She gets up and goes to the window, looking out. He looks down at the chess board, thinking.

WOMAN

Cold and blustery.

MAN moves a piece and hits the timer.

MAN

"This is the way the world ends, this is the way the world ends, this is the way the world ends, not with a bang, but a whimper."

He stares at the chess board. She stares out the window, then at him.

WOMAN

I heard a bang. It was a big big bang. Didn't you hear a bang. Like a big boom.

MAN

I was quoting. You know. A poem. T.S. Elliot.

WOMAN

Big Boom. Probably a bomb. You know, one of those big bombs.

MAN

Po-eee-tree! A poem. A metaphor! Not to be taken seriously. Really.

WOMAN

Hot enough to vaporize. That's what the radio said.

MAN

Oh, what's the point? Are you going to play, or not?

WOMAN

Oh, what's the point?

MAN

The point is, I've started a game, huh, hey, heeey? Started a game. Started. And now we need to finish.

WOMAN

Do we?

MAN

Yes we do.

WOMAN

Why? What's the point?

MAN

Because we started. You cannot have a start without a finish. It's an incomplete paradox.

WOMAN

What?

MAN

You know what I mean. *(Pause)* It's your turn.

She moves a piece and hits the timer.

WOMAN

Do you really believe that they're all gone?

He moves a piece and hits the timer.

MAN

That's what the man on the radio said. Everyone.

WOMAN

Except you and I.

MAN

Except you and me.

WOMAN

Don't correct me, what's the point?

MAN

Don't correct I. (*Pause. He moves a piece and hits the timer.*) What's the point? It's a finish. An end. A denouement. Humans start at point "A", and here we are at point "B". Here we are at the end.

WOMAN

Do you believe that. (*Moves a piece and hits the timer.*) That we're the only ones left?

MAN

The radio does not lie.

WOMAN

The only ones.

MAN

Electronic waves of sound. Vibrations from a series of bouncing electrons. They have no emotions, no feelings, no reason to lie. Why would they lie? (*Moves a piece and hits the timer.*)

WOMAN

Not the radio. The man behind the voice. The man on the radio.

MAN

Men don't lie.

Pause

WOMAN

Really? (*Moves a piece and hits the timer.*)

MAN

Really.

Really?
WOMAN

Would I lie?
MAN

I don't know. Would you?
WOMAN

Nope.
MAN

Is that a lie?
WOMAN

Nope.
MAN

Is that a lie?
WOMAN

MAN
And is that a lie? And is that a lie? And is that a lie? What are you? M.C. Esher?

WOMAN
Suddenly I don't know.

MAN
Well, I can tell you. You're not.

WOMAN
No?

MAN
Nope. He's dead. And you're not.

WOMAN
I'm not. But everyone else is.

MAN
That's what the radio said. The radio said, that they were all dead. Dum dee dee - dee dee.

WOMAN

Oh, what's the point?

MAN

Of what? This? Rhetoric? What else are we supposed to do? (*Moves a piece and hits timer.*)

WOMAN

Well, we can't just sit here doing nothing.

MAN

We're not doing nothing. We're talking and playing chess.

WOMAN

(*Moves a piece and hits timer. Pause.*) Do you have a wife?

MAN

Did.

WOMAN

Did?

MAN

Divorced. She left me. I was no damned good for her. We got married on April 1st, that was probably a bad idea. April Fools and all.

WOMAN

Why do fools fall in love?

MAN

Why? Blue eyes and child bearing hips. Laughs when you tell jokes. Laughs when you fart in bed. That's love right there. Farting in bed. I'm not talking about an all night fart fest, but you know, a friendly toot here and there. Just for laughs.

Pause

WOMAN

Blue eyes and farting.

MAN

Yep. That's not it, you know. Love. It's, well, you know. (*Pause*) She accepts your faults and loves you just the same. Celebrates your stupid little successes. Cries for your stupid little

MAN (cont.)

losses. Love is being there even when you don't want to be. (*Slowly moves a piece.*)

WOMAN

So. What happened?

MAN

Child bearing hips never bore children. Blue eyes became cold and grey. I don't know about the fart thing. I never tried it. At some point you realize that you're not comfortable with a person. You're nervous around them. They don't need you. You don't really need them. Love, like a flower, blooms and dies. (*He hits the timer.*)

WOMAN

So, she didn't have children, so you left her? (*Moves a piece and hits timer.*)

MAN

(*pause. Moves a piece and hits timer.*) That's all you got out of that?

WOMAN

It seemed like a pretty big deal. Especially considering our current situation.

MAN

Situation.

WOMAN

Last man and woman. (*Moves a piece and hits timer.*)

MAN

Naw. It was probably my fault. Really. Out too late. Workaholic. Alcoholic. Co-dependent. Men who love too much, and the women who hate them. You know. (*Moves a piece and hits timer.*)

WOMAN

We should have a baby. Together.

MAN

Together.

WOMAN

You and I.

MAN

Yeah, I figured.

WOMAN

We should.

MAN

What's the point?

WOMAN

We're the last of humanity. The final chance. *(Moves a piece and hits timer.)*

MAN

I don't even know you. *(Moves a piece and hits timer.)*

WOMAN

What does it matter? *(Moves a piece and hits timer.)*

MAN

I like to know what I'm conquering. *(Moves a piece and hits timer.)*

WOMAN

Conquering? Huh. *(Moves a piece and hits timer.)*

MAN

Besides. What's the point?

WOMAN

To save humanity. To revive what's left.

MAN

You want to bring that back? Did you see how awful we treated each other? Genocide. *(Moves a piece.)* Global pollution. *(Moves a piece.)* Car bombs. *(Moves a piece.)* Rape. *(Moves a piece.)* Murder. *(Moves a piece.)* And don't even get me started on the Holocaust. *(Moves a piece three times and finally hits the timer)*

WOMAN

You just took eight turns.

MAN

I was on a roll.

WOMAN

Still.

MAN

Take eight turns yourself. See what I care. What's the point anyway?

WOMAN

We can start over. (*Moves piece.*) Do it right this time. (*Moves a piece.*) Learn from our mistakes. (*Moves a piece.*) Make a better world. (*Moves a piece. Pause. Then moves a piece four times, once with every word.*) People are generally GOOD! (*hits the timer decisively.*)

MAN

(*moves a piece.*) Check.

WOMAN

What? Dammit!

Pause as she looks for a solution. He hits the timer and sits back, very self-satisfied.

MAN

You ever been married?

WOMAN

No.

MAN

Engaged?

WOMAN

No.

MAN

Seriously seeing anyone?

WOMAN

No.

MAN

Dated?

No. WOMAN

Kissed? MAN

No. WOMAN

Never? MAN

No. Never. *(Moves a piece getting herself out of check finally and hits the timer.)* WOMAN

Wow. MAN

What? WOMAN

Oh, nothing. Just surprising, that's all. A woman, an attractive woman such as yourself, never even kissed. MAN

Well, surprising or not, it's true. WOMAN

And now you want to have a baby. MAN

For the good of humanity. WOMAN

What's in it for you? MAN

Nothing. WOMAN

Really?

MAN

Really.

WOMAN

Really?

MAN

Well... and, the mother of all humanity.

WOMAN

Hmmm. (*Moves a piece and hits timer.*)

MAN

Hmmm. (*Moves a piece and hits timer.*)

WOMAN

Well, I don't want to.

MAN

No?

WOMAN

Nope.

MAN

Am I not attractive to you?

WOMAN

No. I just don't want to. Father of all humanity doesn't have the same appeal to me. (*Moves a piece and hits timer.*)

MAN

(*moves a piece and hits timer*) How about a deal?

WOMAN

What kind? (*Moves a piece and hits timer.*)

MAN

WOMAN

The game. If I win, we have a baby and save humanity. If I lose. We don't.

He looks at the board. Pause.

MAN

Okay.

They sit. She gets very intense. Great concentration. She finally moves a piece and hits the timer. He doesn't even pause an moves his piece.

MAN

Checkmate.

WOMAN

What?!

MAN

Checkmate. You lose. No baby. No uh, uh (*mimes an obscene gesture while clicking his tongue.*)

WOMAN

Dammit! Why couldn't we have played checkers!

MAN

Well. (*Pause*) There's always tomorrow.

WOMAN

Is there?

MAN

As long as the radio man says that we're not dead.

WOMAN

Really?

MAN

Really.

WOMAN

We can play the same game tomorrow?

MAN

Sure. Why not?

WOMAN

Same stakes?

MAN

Why not? No point to it, really.

WOMAN

Really.

MAN

Really.

Pause. He starts to reset the chess board. She turns on the radio.

RADIO DJ

This just in. Two people left. Alive and kicking. Two out of two billion. Long way to go folks. But hey! That's what it's all about!... This has been a recording.

Blackout

Last Two on Earth
by
Mike Eserkaln

Cast:
1 male (age 30)
1 female (age 20)
plus one short voice-over

Synopsis: A man and a woman are the last two left on earth after a world wide cataclysm. They have different views on the rebuilding of humanity.