THE INCESSANT CRISIS: A MACHEREYAN READING OF MARY SHELLEY'S *THE LAST MAN*

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Abstract

First published in 1826, Mary Shelley's *The Last Man* is a dystopian novel that depicts the life of Lionel Verney in 2100, who is living in the last days of the Anthropocene as the human population has been eradicated due to a pandemic. While the novel is regarded as the first post-apocalyptic science fiction novel, it had been neglected until the 1960s. Despite owing its context to the nineteenth century, the novel addresses several modern-man issues. The anxiety produced by apocalyptic visions and the fear of extinction are two of the significant twenty-first-century issues due to the ecological crisis and COVID-19 pandemic, which are accurately relatable. Moreover, Lionel's existential dread and identity crisis represent and predict the confusion of modern man. Since the work was written a century before the twenty-first century's traumatic incidents, its perspective on the twenty-first-century man's issues is outstanding. In this study, *The Last Man* would be scrutinized in the light of Pierre Macherey's post-Marxist theory of gaps to see the socio-political elements addressed by the novel that aided Shelley in predicting successive generations' miseries. Moreover, it is discussed if the twenty-first-century man, situated in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic, could escape the ecological crisis and build a better future on earth by attending political changes.

Keywords: Post-marxism, Science-Fiction, Dystopia, Pandemic Literature

INTRODUCTION

Penned by Mary Shelley, *The Last Man* (1826) narrates the story of the final episode of human life on earth due to a twenty-first-century plague pandemic that crosses every border and door but spares Lionel Verney his life. In this novel, Mary Shelley commemorated her late husband, Percy Shelley, whom she had been warned not to publish about by Sir Timothy Shelley whose "small allowance" was her "only financial assistance," and "he threatened to cut it off if she wrote a biography of his radical and scandal haunted son" (Greenblatt, Abrams and Christ 957). Mary Shelley preserved the legacy of her parents and her husband but her plan to publish her husbands remaining poems and essays was postponed "for some fifteen years after 1824, when Mary Shelley acceded to her father-in-law's demand to suppress the remaining copies of the *Posthumous Poems* and not bring the Shelley name into the public arena during his lifetime" (Bennett 44). *The Last Man*, regarded as a prophecy rather than fiction until the twentieth century, kept the memory of

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her beloved lost ones and narrated a story that divulged humanistic concepts beyond the Romantic ethos. Besides using autobiographical elements, it is discussed in this article how she expressed her most profound human concerns through recounting the story of developing characters who fought and were defeated by an unknown destructive source. The apocalyptic dystopian narrative conceals its ideological project that is studied in this article in-between the lines; and although pessimistically, it “considers nostalgically but also skeptically the legacy of Shelleyan radicalism” (Fisch, Mellor and Schor 6). The narrative is saturated with ambivalence towards liberalism and Romantic radicalism.

The Last Man demands as well to be read as a *roman- à-clef*, an act of mourning for Percy Bysshe Shelley and for the three children they had lost, for Byron, and for the collective life they had led. The affinities between Percy Shelley and the character Adrian, Earl of Windsor; Byron and Lord Raymond; Perdita, Lionel Verney and Mary Shelley herself are unmistakable. (Lokke 117)

Artistically using her life experience and Romantic ethos, Mary Shelley created a fictional work that brilliantly safeguarded its ideological project in its main vault hidden under several colliding themes. Moreover, besides immortalizing its characters, Mary marked her solitude and alienation.

Mary Shelley was born to radical activists William Godwin and Mary Wollstonecraft, both viewed as scandalous advocates of liberalism. Left alone in the world after the death of her husband and their closest friend, Lord Byron, Mary Shelley tried hard, by avoiding direct radicalism and activism in her writings and her life, “to work free from the onus of what her contemporaries regarded as the scandalous careers of her mother, father, and husband” (Greenblatt, Abrams and Christ 957). As an isolated lady, alienated from her society, and rejected by her own people, on October 21 1838, she wrote in her journal about her situation as a person who had to carry the burden of her husband’s legacy. She regarded her solitude as a symptom of her hesitation and reluctance in advocating liberalism openly; however, she asserts that she has “never written a word in disfavour of liberalism,” and states her reasons for guarding the silence as an alone impoverished widow (Marshall 319). She then complains:

If I had raved and ranted about what I did not understand, had I adopted a set of opinions, and propagated them with enthusiasm; had I been careless of attack, and eager for notoriety; then the party to which I belonged had

gathered round me, and I had not been alone. (Marshall 320)

These lines reveal how she used the destructive force of the pandemic to skeptically scrutinize the fragility of her parents' and Percy Shelley's radicalism in the face of an inevitable element that resists resolution. She deploys the lethal disease that crosses every border and kills all humankind regardless of their class or race as a manifestation of problems that liberalism failed to solve, and "the disease metaphor has been a favorite among those who do not wish to embrace a total or permanent theory of revolution" (Sterrenburg 328). Nevertheless, she guarded her liberal principles by concealing them alongside the anxiety of the Romantic era in the gaps and the unsaid of her novel. She subtly expressed her idea of humankind's helplessness and Romantic anxiety rooted in the indeterminacy of rapid transitions by narrating the story of the plague-ridden society in *The Last Man*.

Having lost her mother, several siblings to fatal diseases and her husband to the sea, Mary Shelley's perception of nature is akin to several other thinkers of her era who generated literary works that embraced the apocalyptic themes. Surprisingly, there exist several other literary works entitled *The Last Man* written by Thomas Hood, Thomas Beddoes, Thomas Campbell. The theme of the end of Britain's royal structure and apocalypse fueled many early nineteenth-century works; however, "Mary Shelley's *The Last Man* is probably the most expansive in its allusions to political writings and events from the era of the French Revolution, the Napoleonic Empire, and the Greek revolution against the Turks during the 1820's" (Sterrenburg 327). Since the narrative is written cryptically due to the aforementioned reasons, deciphering it through a Machereyan reading could reveal its secrets and help the reader comprehend the work.

In *A Theory of Literary Production* (1966), Pierre Macherey states that the secret ideological project of a literary text is revealed by scrutinizing its "gaps" rather than reading the text because "the book is not self-sufficient; it is necessarily accompanied by a certain absence, without which it would not exist" (Macherey 56). As stated by Terry Eagleton in *Criticism and Ideology* (1976), "Macherey claims that literary works are internally dissonant, and that this dissonance arises from their peculiar relation to ideology" (89). Eagleton compares the Machereyan reading to Freudian psychoanalysis that concentrates on the unconscious rather than the conscious and elevates Machereyan analysis as it goes further than revealing the secret of the text as "the analyst's task is not only to lay bare the meaning of a distorted text, but to expose *the meaning of the text-distortion itself*"

(Eagleton 90). While abundant studies have attempted to interpret the ambiguous plague in *The Last Man*, the vagueness of the pandemic that resists interpretation has been disregarded. According to Eagleton, in a Machereyan analysis, it is crucial to concentrate on the “text distortion” because it reveals the secret concealed in its heart. The questions that could guide the critic are how and why the text is distorted and what this distortion signifies. Nevertheless, the first step is finding the distortion, just as Freudian psychoanalysis attempts to analyze the unconscious by attending to the distortions in the dreams.

Although Macherey believes that the silence of the text could be the result of an intentional or unintentional (unconscious) ellipsis, reading works that have been written enigmatically or in the time of censorship in the light of Macherey’s theory of gaps and literary text’s inherent ideological project reveals their deepest layers of meaning. Mary Shelley’s situation as an offspring of two radical activists and an agonized widow living under the wings of her father-in-law made it necessary for her to express her ideology through different levels of meaning in *The Last Man*.

Macherey disregards the idea of the literary text being the figuration of an ideology; thus, it spares the literary text its autonomy. However, he believes that literature responds to the “ideological climate,” of its era by creating a “specific image of ideology” regardless of the response: “whether it betrays it, whether it puts it in question, or whether it modifies it” (Macherey 218). Machereyan reading goes beyond revealing the concealed meaning by offering a new understanding of the text’s secret, which is regarded as an object of study. Macherey elaborates on the example of Jules Verne and proposes two questions as the guideline for the critic to analyze the theme:

First question: the work originates in a secret to be explained.

Second question: the work is realised in the revelation of its secret.
(Macherey 107)

The questions posed by Macherey to study Jules Verne’s fiction could be customized for studying other science fiction novels and provide the background for creating the theoretical framework of their analysis.

To specify the research questions for studying *The Last Man* in the same manner, it is necessary to ponder its themes and direct the inquiries towards the path of finding its main ideological process. Although the priority of a Machereyan reading is discovering the ideological project, the other aspects of the literary text are the routes to the study’s

primary concern. The political theme of *The Last Man* responds to the theme of nature's hostility towards man and the cruciality of defending humankind by promoting scientific advancements. However, Macherey believes that "the letter of the work is the mask" (86), and under the surface of the work and its apparent themes, there lies a greater ideological project that accompanies every piece of literature. Therefore, the Machereyan questions that could illuminate the ideology of the work must focus on the correlation of the evident themes to scrutinize the root of their lush tree, which reveals the central theme:

1. What does *The Last Man's* depiction in the twenty-first century signify?
2. What is the significance of setting the point of the departure of the narrative before the pandemic?
3. What is the central theme in the heart of *The Last Man*?
4. How does the text distortion signify its pivotal role in the novel?

This article attempts to respond to these questions by deploying Macherey's theories and other previous studies on Mary Shelley's fiction. As Macherey asserts, "it seems not only possible but necessary to begin from the work itself, rather than at a distance or simply by moving through it" (186). Thus, in an attempt to answer the four questions, the themes are analyzed and pondered in the following sections.

Nature versus Human

For the Romantic thinkers, the correlation between nature and society was undeniably worth studying as they directly responded to each other. From a Romantic perspective, nature and human society die or are reborn together; they are emphatic, and nature is personified. The notion of the apocalypse once juxtaposed the end of the world, and the end of humankind; However, physics in the seventeenth century had decentralized church and human agents through Copernican confirmation of heliocentrism and extraterrestrial life, and in the eighteenth century, geology claimed that any species could become extinct. Hence, the apocalypse now could occur without Millennialism and eradicate humankind without extinguishing the universe. While English Neo-classic thinkers perceived nature as an emblem of stability and order and celebrated its neutrality, the intensified senses of the Romantic literature led to the personification of nature more often to present it as a solace, source of inspiration, or even hostile force.

Highly influenced by the French Revolution, English Romanticism adopted the idea

that nature revolts against humanity to eradicate the human population that is intensified by “the defeat of the Napoleonic Empire in 1815” (Sterrenburg 326). As explained by Lee Sterrenburg in “*The Last Man*” (1978), the “utopian optimism” ignited by the revolution was swiftly replaced by pessimistic thoughts because “after the Reign of Terror and the official reactionism of Thermidor, the Romantic poets in England had lost faith in the Revolution” (325).

Far from demanding a universal regeneration in the realm of politics, nature now seemed to be conspiring to destroy all of civilization through such catastrophic agencies as fire, storm, flood, earthquake, or epidemic. Nature was no longer a refuge; if she was a bride, she was a destructive one. (Sterrenburg 326)

From this perspective, the whole socio-political concept experienced alteration in its meaning. *The Last Man*'s narrative nevertheless becomes the story of all humankind; those idealists like Adrian who attempt to save humanity but fail, those whose love fails to conquer all. Sharing uncanny resemblances with Percy Shelley, Adrian believes in free will and that humankind can achieve everything if they power through:

The choice is with us; just as let us will it, and our habitation becomes a paradise. For the will of man is omnipotent, blunting the arrows of death, soothing the bed of disease, and wiping away the tears of agony. And what is each human being worth, if he do not put forth his strength to aid his fellow-creatures? My soul is a fading spark, my nature frail as a spent wave; but I dedicate all of intellect and strength that remains to me, to that one work, and take upon me the task, as far as I am able, of bestowing blessings on my fellow-men! (Shelley and McWhir 60)

Skeptically viewing the imperious faith in human will, Mary Shelley depicts the defeat of all idealistic ideas in *The Last Man*. As stated by Graham Allen in explaining the context of *Frankenstein* (1818), Mary Shelley “displays a caution when confronted with arguments which assert that human beings have a potentially complete control over themselves and the world in which they live”(10). She expresses heartfelt respect for idealist characters, but shows how futile Adrian and Lionel's reasonable efforts were in averting the disaster. Mary Shelley's studied determinism, which results from her life experience and observations, aligns neither with passivity nor amorality; it is only a realistic perspective on life that denies the omnipotence of human will.

Moreover, Mary Shelley's realistic perspective prevents falling into Romantic despair. Her artistic depiction of broader pictures in *Frankenstein* and *The Last Man* shows how alleviating the socio-political pains of an era fails to mend the most human problems that exceed time and place. In a socio-political analysis of Jules Verne, "who wanted to make his work as transparent as possible by emphasizing the obviousness of its articulations" (179), Macherey states that "fiction is the privileged form of expression during this historical transition" (181). Upon facing the failure of Romantic ideals, to those who believed in "the good cause," the world collapsed. Lord Raymond's statement in his "mournful" tone, reveals the depth of the rooted anxiety in nineteenth-century England:

Earth is to me a tomb, the firmament a vault, shrouding mere corruption.
Time is no more, for I have stepped within the threshold of eternity; each
man I meet appears a corse, which will soon be deserted of its animating
spark, on the eve of decay and corruption. (Shelley and McWhir 147)

The pestilence and the pandemic in *The Last Man* are undeniably figurative as noted by many scholars. As pointed out by Samantha Web, "at no point does Lionel use his story as a warning to an anticipated post-pestilential society...In fact, Lionel resists any attempt to make sense of the plague or to give it a point" (Bennett and Curran 127). While interpreting the plague has been attempted in abundant studies, its ambiguous nature resists simple interpretation and explanation. Detected as the text distortion, the vagueness of the pestilence is scrutinized to reveal the text's secret. This haziness of the situation is formed in two layers of narration and content. The point of departure in *The Last Man* starts from the backstory of its characters, and the novel abstains from elaborating its title in the first volume. Later, the element of the plague emerges; however, the philosophical contemplation of the situation maintains its force and refuses to elaborate on the nature and source of the fatal disease.

The Point of Departure

One of the most notable characteristics of *The Last Man* is allocating a volume to narrating the story before the plague pandemic, while the title directly refers to the fatal disease's destructing humankind. Although the novel is created upon several themes, it is crucial to see "if these themes are similar or different, independent or in a hierarchy" (Macherey 185). Nevertheless, the plague is vague and resists simple interpretation, but its most significant characteristic is its inevitable temperament. In the novel's first volume, the institution and structures are reformed, and ideals are born and refined; however, in

the following two volumes, the ineludible destructive element of the fatal disease shatters the efforts. Thus, the themes of national and individual isolation, identity crisis, scientific advancements, and failure collide dialogically rather than form a hierarchy. The first volume starts a romance in which the characters fight problems and conquer them with love, rationality, and war; however, it contrasts with the plague pandemic that humans fail to defeat in the subsequent volumes

Rather than causing the end of the Windsor idyll in volume I, the plague in fact merely manifests forces already “incarnate in,” “entwined with” the beings whom Verney so lovingly portrays in the retrospective romance of volume I. (Lokke 118)

While setting the story in the twenty-first century could have been a means of distancing the dissolution of monarchy from the nineteenth century, it also implies that no scientific medical advancements could prevent the pandemic from eradicating the whole human population. It also broadens the picture by securing its ideological project that is universal and eternal. Lionel’s idealism is akin to Adrian’s, and his national pride and profound hope in human action make him believe that the pandemic annihilates only those in the remote lands. Despite knowing that “in the south, the disease, virulent and immedicable, had nearly annihilated the race of man,” and “in the north, it was worse,” he asserts that “the great plague would, in after years, become matter of history and wonder” (Shelley and McWhir 204):

I contracted my view to England. The overgrown metropolis, the great heart of mighty Britain, was pulseless. Commerce had ceased. All resort for ambition or pleasure was cut off—the streets were grass-grown—the houses empty—the few, that from necessity remained, seemed already branded with the taint of inevitable pestilence...Yet we were not all to die. No truly, though thinned, the race of man would continue. (Shelley and McWhir 204)

Lionel’s hopeful idea that the Englishmen’s effort could restore the order conveys the sense of superiority shattered in the end. *The Last Man*’s insistence on the inevitability of the destruction that cannot be averted by Lionel’s effort to “guard those entrusted by nature and fate” by making the Windsor Castle “the haven and retreat for the wrecked bark of human society” (Shelley and McWhir 205), highlights the parity between the English and all other people whom they regarded as the “other” is the binary opposition of British/The

Other they had created. As stated by Audrey Fisch, "Lionel continues to see England as simultaneously omnipotent and flawed" (Fisch, Mellor and Schor 269). However, later awe and agony in Lionel's statement show his acceptance of the dissolution of this binary opposition:

Where was the plague? "Here—every where!" one voice of horror and dismay exclaimed...With one mighty sweep of its potent weapon, all caution, all care, all prudence were levelled low: death sat at the tables of the great, stretched itself on the cottager's pallet, seized the dastard who fled, quelled the brave man who resisted: despondency entered every heart, sorrow dimmed every eye. (Shelley and McWhir 215)

Subtly expressed, even if Adrian had lived to restore order, there was nothing to be done. In *The Age of Hypochondria* (2010), George Grinnell finds the root of "Romantic hypochondria" in scrutiny of British imperialism and colonialism; and states that "the plague is viewed as foreign, though its foreignness is suspect because the plague is utterly global in its spread and its effects" (Grinnell 115). On another note, Morton Paley also writes that "the ultimate mysterious personification in *The Last Man* is the Plague itself" (Fisch, Mellor and Schor 120). Mary Shelley agrees neither with British imperialism nor revolutionary radicalism as her worldview crosses all the borders to show the impact of one nation on another, influences the world. The pandemic metaphor shows how a disease in remote lands is not confined to a specific region and finally crawls to the whole world and affects all humankind.

By dedicating a volume of *The Last Man* to the life and conflicts of the characters before the plague, Mary Shelley highlights the impotence of modern civilization in the face of destructive powers. In the heart of the ideologic project of the novel, anxiety is the thrust moving the plot forward. While this anxiety in the first volume is directed at the structures, in later volumes it is boosted by the force that threatens not only the civilized institutions but also humankind's existence.

Modernism and Anxiety

The anxiety found in the heart of *The Last Man* is akin to that of the twentieth-century postwar fiction that was under the influence of several catastrophic incidents of its era. The Romantic anxiety of disintegration faded when the Victorian era's order entered the discourse; however, upon facing two destructive World Wars and the Spanish Flu

pandemic in-between them, the anxiety produced by uncertainty crawled back into the fiction as notable authors and playwrights created works based on it. Mary Shelley's *The Last Man*, neglected for more than a century, was brought into the spotlight in the 1960s to show how this anxiety could be traced back to the nineteenth century. Although the novel was not well received in 1826 and "ridiculed" in its time, as stated by Paley, "behind that derision one senses a certain eschatological anxiety" (Fisch, Mellor and Schor 108). The anxiety ingrained by the novel was not well-received in its own time but was later appreciated as upcoming factual life events made it inevitable for humankind to avoid the indeterminacy.

Mary Shelley boosts this anxiety by further denying the main Romantic ethos that elevates art and considers it sublime, the last remaining succor and the only means to salvation. Upon realizing that he is the last man in the world, Lionel views art drastically differently from before.

Later in the book, after Lionel Verney becomes the Last Man, art takes on a sinister aspect. In the world of the Last Man, these masterpieces appear not as bringers of solace but as self-born mockers of man's enterprise, and, as in Yeats's poem, they too break hearts. (Fisch, Mellor and Schor 114)

Thus, the anxiety is highlighted and deteriorated by reminding humankind that even his imagination and artistic production outlive them. *The Last Man* exposes humankind forgetting life itself and concentrating on achievements and institutional structures. The innovative meaninglessness of all human-made creations enters the narrative to express the correlation between society and its productions. The anxiety in Mary Shelley's novel is not generated by the fear of failure but is rooted in the potential impending meaninglessness of victory. She intends to show that all the equations that seem highly significant in nineteenth-century England are only valuable in the existing discourse and express the anxiety of its cessation, making the arguments invalid.

The world of *The Last Man* shares the indeterminacy of the twentieth-century world after World Wars, the Cold War, the outbreak of Spanish flu, the drought of the Dust Bowl, the Great Chinese Famine, the Second Indochina War, and the Atomic Bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. It shares the quality of postmodern works by showing that the relationship between concepts and attributes are arbitrary and change when the discourse is altered. As stated by Robert Snyder:

The primary terror posed by the plague is that it constitutes a phenomenon

which defies all referential sense. Like its victims, we are able to understand neither its origin nor mode of transmission; we see only its blighting effects, none of its presumed causes. (Snyder 440)

Mary Shelley's expressed anxiety is an invitation to unity and a cry for community. Although her life circumstances made her deny the revolutionary spirit in its Romantic sense, *The Last Man's* radicalism advocates egalitarianism and directs the readers' attention toward more destructive natural forces the exceed conflicts created by humankind through centuries of civilization. By depicting a disease that enters every castle and border, *The Last Man* is an invitation for both imperialists and radical revolutionaries to remember the parity of humankind. As stated by Jennifer Wagner, "the tragic element clearly lies in the irreconcilable collision of the ideal and the real, fantasy and action, in the fall from future-oriented utopian images to desperate delusions of survival"(761). Mary Shelley rejects idealism in favor of pragmatism by imagining a world in which radical changes in the institutions have happened. As Wagner points it out, the novel becomes a tragedy. Thus the *hamartia* of the noble heroes created and evolved in volume I of the novel concentrates on their ideals and having irrational faith in human will.

Many critics point out that *The Last Man* is a eulogy, but Mary Shelley's grief is more than over losing her husband, children, and Lord Byron; "she mourns for a certain type of universal vision" (Johnson, Butler and Felman 9). Barbara Johnson finds it significant that Lionel spends his last days in Rome, the "birthplace of *homo humanus*"(Ibid). In the main vault of *The Last Man*, there is an anxiety of forgetting the humanistic ideals and attempting to radically change or eliminate the institutions while their significance is magnified. The overrated scrimmage of radical revolutionaries was not Mary Shelley's issue, and a source of anxiety that crawled in her works was produced by feeling alienated and not understood. In *The Last Man*, just when the West was prepared and attempted to defeat the East, they were all conquered and eradicated by a fatal disease that deprived the whole conflict of meaning.

CONCLUSION

Through a Machereyan reading that reveals the main ideological project of a literary text by uncovering its general themes, *The Last Man* was studied to show how it secures deep anxiety of losing humanistic values in the modern world of rapid changes. Living in the time of the COVID-19 pandemic reinforced an interest in reviewing the apocalyptic dystopian fiction that has actually stolen the spotlight in the last few decades due to the

deterioration of the ecological crisis that threatens human life. The most horrendous apocalyptic visions are fueled by daily news. The dystopian themes provide a background for creative modern authors to think beyond the horizon of mere facts and elevate human imagination to use apocalypse figuratively to convey their most profound worries. The disintegration anxiety that devours modern humans' minds and reminds them of their stance in the world has existed since scientific advancements proved that humankind is not standing at the center of the world; thus, the fact induced deep anxiety upon acknowledging nature's indifference towards Homo sapiens' existence. *The Last Man* uses plague figuratively to indicate the parity of all mankind in the face of an inevitable destructive force and convey the anxiety produced by the indeterminacy sensed in the Romantic era. While most Romantic radical thinkers sought to change the institutions, Mary Shelley depicted a broader picture to revive the humanistic ethos of community and unity in an era full of rapid transitions.

The anxiety expressed in the nineteenth-century English Romantic fiction of Mary Shelley is a fear of meaninglessness produced by rapid socio-political changes that threaten to change the concepts and their meanings. *The Last Man's* anxiety does not result from the loss of elements but is generated by fear of losing the world in which the elements dwell and, more importantly, this loss in Mary Shelley's mindset occurs subjectively rather than objectively. The last encounter of Lionel with artistic emblems shows how the existence of the concepts as well as objects relies on their acknowledgment by another agent who perceives them. In the second and third volumes of the novel, the plague's vicious attack on human life makes the political conflicts presented in the first volume meaningless. While many scholars had noticed the inherent anxiety in *The Last Man*, this article concentrated on the "unsaid" of the work to highlight its main ideological project lost in its letters. The contrast between the first and following volumes of the novel and a study of the ambiguity of the plague revealed the source of the anxiety in the novel and found its affinities with modern fiction.

While the twenty-first-century world is involved with many political issues and power relations produce many conflicts, the ecological crisis devouring the whole planet can only be averted by community and unity among all nations. Although idealistic, the only answer to the earth problems lies in solidarity as we can see how the COVID-19 pandemic, just as the plague in *The Last Man*, crossed every border and castle and will not be controlled until the majority of all the world population, regardless of their nationality, gender, class, and race gets vaccinated.

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