

## The Last Person

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I thought I was the last person on earth, and then I heard a knock on the door ... a rather heavy knock.

I'm pretty sure it wasn't G. Friday. She's a person, but she's not due in this world till later. She's always interested in what I say and listens intently whenever I speak forth paragraphs of what most people would consider drivel. G. Friday happily writes down the words I dictate ... for a nickel a line. She never worries over how weird my world gets, but simply follows me into to it. She recently asked for a raise.

I know, I know ... there was that knock on the door and I'll tell you about it. No, it wasn't G. Friday's tentative little tap. These were heavy bangs, a thudding that rattled the door in its frame. The strikes came rather slowly all in a row, and I'm sure there were three. They were like this: THUD! (Say something quick.) THUD! (Say it again quick.) THUD! (That was too quick!) At the sound of the first, my eyes swept to the door, and when the second and third bangs arrived I saw the knob wiggle and heard the locknig chain jiggle. Could three mean something? One should be careful of interpretation.

Remember the movie "On The Beach.?" Marooned in Australia after the Nuclear Amrageddon, Gregory Peck takes a submarine with a full crew all the way to San Francisco to investigate an erratic Morse code radio signal. It might have come from West Coast survivors

who didn't know the telegraph code, but tapped the key incessantly for help. Turns out the wind was whipping a window shade and a Coke bottle down on the telegraph key of a deserted transmitting station, powered by a nuclear reactor that would run almost forever. What a great twist in the story!

Is three strikes on the door similar to three rifle shots fired in the woods when you're lost? Or could they be meaningless, only coincidence? Maybe three Turkey Buzzards happened to fly into my door with perfect but unintentional timing. Stranger things have happened. Everyone disappeared fifteen minutes ago.

Of course I went to the door to open it and see if Gregory Peck waited outside. He's dead, but great actors never truly die. This is my movie and I should certainly be able to choose the actors, no matter their breathing status or even their contractual obligations.

Before I could put my hand on the knob, the door swung out at me, revealing a heavy old man. He looked just like me and told me he was the last person on earth. And he wanted to know why I banged thrice on his door. Behind him stood little G. Friday, pen in hand, writing furiously as she tried to keep up with our conversation.

My hand hurts awful and my knuckles are skinned. I may give up writing film scripts. They get inside my head too easily. Besides, three strikes and ....

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