

FROM A READERS GROUP IN KING OF PRUSSIA, PENNSYLVANIA:

"I recently started a book club for a group of friends. Our first book was *The Eight*, and we all loved it. This group consists of about 7 women, all under the age of 30."

- * What did you like most about the book?
- * What did you dislike about the book?
- * Who was your favorite character?
- * What did you think of the ending? Was it what you expected as you were reading the book?
- * The book was published in 1990. Based on my [group leader's] knowledge as a software engineer, I think that the technology described in the book was a bit too advanced for the time or the people working on it. This seemed to be a recurring problem in the book. Do you agree? Did you think it served its purpose in the plot?
- * Do you think that discoveries have been made in the past that have been lost, whether on purpose or just by passage of time?.
- * Chess is a very popular metaphor as was demonstrated by the quotes at the beginning of the chapters. What is your opinion of the 'life is a game' concept.?
- * What would you have done with the set if you had it?
- * Do you think they will actually bury the set and leave it buried?
- * Who would you cast in the movie?

FOLLOW-ON QUESTIONS WITH KATHERINE'S ANSWERS FROM DISCUSSION LEADER (KING OF PRUSSIA, PENNSYLVANIA):

- * Was Catherine the Great white queen before Catherine Grand?
KN: No, I am assuming there was no game underway during the 1000 years the pieces were buried. Also, Catherine Grand came from India and chess itself came from India, so she would have an important esoteric connection.
- * Was Valentine slated to become the White Queen (Black Queen?) had she lived?
KN: Nope, the abbess pulled a fast one on the girls. She knew the history of the game, which was passed down to her from the year 800 by oral tradition. So she knew that Mireille was slated to be the B.Q.(Birth date, mark on hand, etc). She also knew that Mireille would not accept the job unless there was some bait--so she used "protecting Valentine" as the lure to get Mireille invested in the game.
- * Did Mireille have true immortality, or was she slowly dying? There were comments that she had show some signs of aging. Was suicide an option for her?
KN: It is my understanding from the stories of the Count of St Germain, Cagliostro etc, that the elixir just makes you live a very long time in good health, like the biblical figures who lived 900 years. You can still commit suicide or be killed by a bullet or a bomb, but your normal life expectancy multiplies by perhaps ten times.
- * Have you ever considered writing a book continuing the story?
KN: I am working on the sequel right now!

