

# **The Last One Standing**

## **By Mia Sinosic-Cass**

After all these years of hunting, and cutting us down, I thought that they'd had enough. I was wrong.

As the new day began, and streaks of sunlight crept into the room, my eyes flickered open. I poked my head out from under the bed and hesitantly scanned my surroundings.

Thank god. I'm safe.

As I stood up from the ground, I maneuvered myself towards the window, avoiding the shards of glass scattered across the floor. Cautiously, I lifted my face above the window cill and stared into the world. How depressing; to wake up each morning and see this.

If, five years ago, you told me what our world would be like now, I wouldn't have believed you. Earth was no longer itself, more like an empty carcass of what it used to be. All that's left is the wreckage of where I used to call home. All besides me; and them.

It was just over five years ago when our fate had been sealed. As the sun was setting outside the window of our cramped two-bedroom apartment, my family and I huddled around the TV, eagerly awaiting the 7:30pm program. All went so silent that you could hear a pin drop.

*Good evening all. I am here tonight to announce the next step in technology, which will benefit people all over the world. We leaned in eagerly.*

*For the past two decades, scientists have been looking into the area of Artificial intelligence. However, recently, researchers have made many major discoveries that have been key in unlocking one of the most technologically advanced phenomena known to man. I would now like to introduce the AI-39!*

Everyone went silent.

*Using Artificial Intelligence Technology, we have been able to create an adaptable humanoid robot that has the exact same appearance, personality and mind as its human counterpart. These robots will assist humans in their everyday lives, completing their everyday tasks and duties.*

The silence that filled the room was quickly broken by the chatter amongst us all. We were so confused, so astonished; so naive...

*I remember how excited I was the morning I went to the lab to be examined. There, I endured a day's worth of testing, including a brain scan, speech, gesture and walking analysis, personality tests, as well as full body 360° photographs. After that, my robot was just about ready to be made.*

*A couple weeks later, I was awoken by a knock at the door. Drowsily, I hopped out of bed and opened the door. It was... me? Well, another me. My eyes lit up.*

*My clone... I was full of excitement. We were so alike, it was uncanny- Just like the reflection in a mirror..*

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*Dear viewers, it is now time. After three months, the worldwide community of AI-39 will no longer be the clones of humans. We are now the originals. Please begin your protocol AI-2549. Soon we will have succeeded in eliminating the rest of all "humans"*

The screen went static as my mum and I looked at each other in fear. Days passed and we started to panic. Videos began circulating the media displaying clones murdering their owners. "They're coming for us," stuttered mum, pacing back and forth. "We need to leave."

No one was safe. The city quickly became filled with dead bodies and destruction.

Then, all of a sudden, someone knocked on the door. It was them. Tearing up, I hugged Mum tightly. "I love you" I whispered, before jumping out the back window and running.

I ran for hours.

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*Waking up every day, I feel sad. Hundreds of questions flood my mind as my sanity begins slipping away from me. Why am I the one destined to live this sad and bounded life, surrounded by nothing except fear?*

*Each day I follow the same routine. Wake up, eat, sleep, repeat. There's nothing more to it! All that's keeping me going is the knowledge that I've been chosen for a reason; and that one day I will allow humans to flourish once again. But waking up this morning, I feel different. The motivation to live is all gone.*

*As I'm tightly gripping the door handle, still debating my decision, I look back at my bedroom and begin to tear up. After all of these years of hiding, this is how it's going to end? But I know it's the only way.*

*I open the door and step outside. In this moment of despair, my life flashes before my eyes. Everyone I've ever loved; gone. Every happy memory I've ever experienced; cut short. And it's all because of them.*

*All the grief, sadness and anger that's been bottled up inside of me is ready to come out. Without thinking, I slam the door behind me and storm out onto the street.*

*Arms open wide, I scream at the top of my lungs. "Come get me!"*

*For the first time in years, I feel powerful; like no one can take this feeling away. Arrogantly, I turn around and find myself face-to-face with my clone. There it stands; a perfect reflection. As I stare into its eyes, I can see that there is nothing there. No emotion, love, or happiness. It's just a robot; programmed to follow protocol.*

*I look it up and down, and in its hand, I see a gun facing me intently. I begin to turn and run, unknowing that a sharp echoing shot was about to be fired.*

*I grab my side and fall to my knees. My breathing becomes sparse as blood oozes out of my stomach. I look towards my clone and see no remorse.*

*It walks up to me, and places the gun to my head.*

*All goes black.*