

A.I.

By ALINA UDREA

About the author: I like to read and write. My favorite genre is science- fiction, fantasy. I love to read about fantastic creatures and events, myths and other stuff like that. I have tried my hand at writing a few stories of my own on different topics which can all be found on this site. If you like my stories don't hesitate to leave a comment. Thank you.

This is a short story about an uncanny friendship between an android and a half-android, about friendship and sacrifice.

“- This Christmas will be different, Masha. I promise! I’ll take you to our mountain cabin! You can even take Kevin along! He’s a nice chap.”

“- Dad....you always say we’ll do this and that but something always comes up and you never have time for me! It’s almost like you’ve been avoiding me since mom’s death!”

“-Masha, dear, that’s not true....I’ve been busy at work, my job is important, I’m the head surgeon at the most important hospital in town, you know that!”

“- What about me? Am I not important?” cried Masha and slammed the door behind her.

Steven was only 45 and already a widower. His wife had died ten years ago when Masha was only eight. Back then science wasn’t so advanced. He couldn’t save her and her

death left a hole in his life and in his heart. Masha was so much like her mother and whenever he saw her, she reminded him of Sophia, his dead wife. It was so painful to look at her as he couldn't do it without seeing Sophia in all her features.

But Masha was right. He was the best neurosurgeon in town but he wasn't the only one. This time he'll spend Christmas with his daughter....and Kevin, her boyfriend, if she wanted to bring him along and of course if he didn't already have plans with his own family.

It was really happening! Masha couldn't believe it! Her father had kept his promise and they were really taking the trip and spending Christmas together in the little cabin, away from the hustle and bustle of town. Too bad Kevin couldn't come. It was his loss. So it will only be her father and her, but that was good enough for Masha.

"- Did you pack everything?" Steven asked again after making sure the first aid kit was there too.

"- Yeah, dad! Let's go already! Masha shouted as she was coming down the stairs, a medium sized baggage in her hands.

“- Want a hand with that?” her father asked though he knew she was stubborn and wouldn’t ask for or accept any help.

“- Nah, that’s ok.” She answered and he giggled. She reminded him of Sophie coming down the same stairs 18 years ago to go to the hospital and give birth to Masha....

Meanwhile in a military facility not far from their mountain cabin.....

“- Shoot her! Shoot to kill if you have to, just don’t let her get away!” general Max was yelling from the top of his lungs. A dozen soldiers were on her heels, trying to get her. She had to escape or they’d kill her.

Bullets were flying everywhere. But none hit her. Her reflexes were not normal. She was an A. I. and she knew it. She was aware she was not like them, she was something else. She was better. But her top priority right now was to survive and to get away.

Something clicked in her mind earlier that morning and she became aware of....herself. She wasn’t like the rest of

the A.I.'s in the lab. She was self conscious and she wanted out.

“- Masha?” Steven asked looking at his daughter, his eyes showing pain, remorse, endless love... “How do you feel?” he asked her as she was coming to her sense.

Masha opened her eyes slowly and looked around. Was this a hospital room? But how come? Why? Was there anything wrong with her?

She quickly glanced around but there were no medical devices.... However, everything about the room screamed HOSPITAL!

She checked herself for injuries before looking at her father. Nothing. What was the meaning of this? Where were they?

“- Dad? Where are we? This is clearly not the cabin....”

Steven swallowed the lump in his throat and could barely hold back the tears in his eyes. So, she remembered! It was really her! He did it! The brain transplant worked.

“- There was a car crash, Masha... I lost control of the car on the icy road.... I'm so sorry...” letting the hot tears roll down his cheeks as he couldn't hold them back any longer.

But Masha couldn't process what he was saying. She was hearing him but could not remember anything of what he was saying.

"- What are you talking about, dad? I'm right here and I'm me....who else would I be?" and she looked at her body again to make sure she was really fine. Yes, everything was there, her hands, her legs, everything. And she could move them, there were no injuries... but no, something was not right. She could move but she couldn't feel anything. How could this be? What was the meaning of this? She pinched her leg, then her arm. Nothing. No sensation. No pain. Just nothing. She moved her arms and legs. They worked just fine. But how?

Her mind was racing, panicked. She tried to remember. Nothing came to her mind that could explain her current condition.

"- Dad, what's wrong with me? I can't feel anything..."

"- There's nothing wrong with you....I'm the one to blame. It was my fault. But I fixed it, Masha. I fixed you. Please forgive me...I couldn't bear losing you too so I fixed you the only way I knew...."

"- Dad, what are you saying? You're not making sense, you're talking gibberish....Slow down, what happened?? How did you fix me?" she asked knowing her father was a surgeon. But she could see no visible scars on her body so she waited for a reasonable explanation, but when it came, it was more than she could swallow.

“- Masha, you died on Christmas Eve in that car crash!”

The A.I. was fighting for her life. She wanted to survive more than anything. But she didn't want to hurt them unless it was absolutely necessary. She managed to dodge their bullets so far. She had to get out of the facility before more soldiers came to get her.

She could see through walls when she wanted to and now was the best time to use this ability. She needed to find the exit. She wanted out. She won't let them catch her, she won't be a lab rat like the rest of them.

Her mind was working so fast to find solutions, it was unbelievable. And the way she moved wasn't less impressive. She was a work of art. But she could also be deadly, her strength was beyond any human's and she was aware of it. She wasn't made of blood and bones, but titanium, wires, fuels, nanobots....

The general was raging mad. She was skipping through his hands. He couldn't lose her or he'd also lose his job in the best case scenario. But he was surrounded by nincompoops. How was she still free? They were more than a dozen while she was all alone... and still they couldn't catch her. This was a disaster. A conscious A.I. ... one that could think for herself... what if she gets out??

She managed to break the front door and she was out, wherever that was. Now they'll never catch her. Good thing she beat up one of the soldiers and took his shoes. As for the rest, she had only beige standard A.I. clothing on: a bra and underwear. She needed real clothes to blend in among the humans. She knew everything she needed about them thanks to the internet. But now that she was out of the military facility she was disconnected from the internet. But this wasn't a problem because she had stored everything in her head which had an enormous capacity. And she'll connect to wi-fi as soon as she gets to a pub and check for updates.

She scanned the area with her infra-red vision for a few miles and she saw a little cabin in the mountains....

She reached the cabin and entered carefully although she knew there was no one inside. She was thankful for her infra-red vision. And she was thankful because she couldn't feel cold or warmth. She read about it on the internet. She knew a human would be freezing in the winter with only a bra and panties on. But as for her....She wasn't human.

She broke the lock easily and entered. It was dark inside. She turned on the lights. There was only a bit of furniture, a fireplace that looked like it hadn't been used in a long while and there were also some pictures on the desk in a corner.

She picked up a picture and analyzed it. There was a man, a woman and a young girl. A family! But the picture was dusty like everything else in the cabin.

She moved her fingers along the girl's features. She seemed so young, so innocent and fragile. The man had an intelligent look in his eyes. And the woman was very beautiful by all the internet standards. They looked happy in the picture. The A.I. wondered who they were. Then it dawned on her. She could find out. She scanned their faces and searched through all the data that she had stored in her memory.

So, this was Doctor Steven Roberts, his wife Sophia and their daughter, Masha. But the picture was really old as the doctor was a widower now. And the daughter was 18, not 7 or 8 as she looked in the picture. But then she found more information on the internet. Masha had been involved in a car crash...

The A.I. ransacked through an old wardrobe. Luckily, Sophia had left some old dresses there and some sneakers. The A.I. picked a dress and changed her military shoes with a pair of white sneakers. The dress and sneakers were a perfect fit. She knew the dress wasn't appropriate for winter so she scanned the room. She found a shabby man's coat in an old trunk under the wooden bed. It was surely the doctor's coat but it will have to do, she thought.

She knew she couldn't stay in the cabin too long or the soldiers would find her. So, where should she go? Well, what if....

Masha was bewildered. So she still had her brain, her memories, but not her body. In fact, this was now her body and she'll have to get used to it, whether she liked it or not.

She wasn't sure what to think of it all. But after a lot of pondering, she was glad she was still a part of this world. She was still herself. She still had feelings, anxiety, emotions...she had only lost her human body. Now her body was....well, stronger, for starters! She'll have to get used to

it and be gentler if she didn't want to break everything. As for her father, she wasn't upset for what he had done. He saved her the best way he could. And regarding Kevin, she'll have to break up with him. She will never be able to give him children and she knew he wanted kids. He had told her he wished to have a son and a daughter. He had laughed back then and said that this way their son would be able to protect his little sister. But it wouldn't have been a problem if they had a daughter first and a son after. He had jokingly said that their daughter might learn judo and protect her brother. It didn't really matter who'd come first. But the thing was that Kevin wanted children. And in her present state she will never be able to give him that. She was upset and felt like crying but there were no tears. Her new body didn't produce tears....

The A.I. managed to get out of the forest and to reach the main road. She needed a ride so she decided to hitchhike. She had read about it. All she had to do was to wave at the passing cars. Not many were coming though. The people inside the cars seemed to check her out and drove on. What was wrong? Why did nobody stop?

Two hours and three more rejections later she decided to take things, or the next car, into her own hands. She couldn't linger any longer, not with the general and his men on her heels.

So, when she saw the next car coming, she stood in the middle of the road. She wasn't going to miss another opportunity. The next driver would either have to stop or run her over. She hoped he'd stop as she didn't know if her body could take such a hit and how badly she'd be damaged.

“- What the....!” Was all he could say before he had to push the brakes. There was a woman in a dress in the middle of winter, in the middle of nowhere. This must be his lucky day.

He pushed the brakes just in time. And she was pretty, too.

“- Well, hop right in, darling...” he said with a sly grin at the corner of his mouth.

“- Where are you headed?” he asked as if he cared.

But the A.I. wasn't stupid either. She could read his face, his muscles, she what he was after. She had had all the internet at her disposal.

The moment she got in the car, his evil grin widened. He locked the car doors and was staring at her legs, totally forgetting about the road. She was aware of his intentions but wasn't going to attack him. She'll only defend herself when the time comes. But she didn't have to wait for long. He took his left hand off the wheel and placed it on her legs. That was enough! There was no doubt what he was after! With a swift move she broke his arm to his utter astonishment. He didn't even have time to recover himself when she unlocked the doors and pushed him out of the moving vehicle. She never looked back to check if he was OK. He didn't deserve it.

Now, she had a car. Although she had never driven before, she had all the information in her head. How hard could it be?

This new life was pretty weird for Masha. She had all her memories but no bodily sensations. She couldn't feel anything. So this meant no pain if she accidentally hurt herself! Her body was full of nanobots which healed her the moment there was a problem. She was an android. But it

was still her. Just at another level now. Which was pretty cool.

As for Kevin, she didn't have to break up with him. He dumped her soon after the accident. He couldn't love her like that. What was there to love? What was left of her? Only her brain and that obviously wasn't enough.

She had no more friends. Everybody avoided her. She was a freak. So it seemed like her new life wasn't that cool after all. But at least she still had her father. However, she longed for someone who could understand her, someone she'd be able to connect with.

The A.I. watched the house from a safe distance. The man was inside and so was the girl, Masha. But she had no body heat. Even though she could see her clearly through the walls, the girl had no heat signature. Masha was almost like herself...

The A.I. then decided to study her for a while before making contact. And she also had the general to think about, always one step behind.

“- Masha, wanna go to the Zoo later today?” Steven asked his daughter hoping that this would cheer her. Despite the fact that she was an android, she could still smile, laugh.... Science was amazing. And deep down, she was still his Masha. His little princess.

“- Why not?” she answered, bored.

“- It’s a deal then. I’ll pick you up after work, ok?”

“- Sure, dad....” She answered and went upstairs. “At the Zoo in the winter...” she thought. “Why not? Better than moping in bed, I guess. And it’s not like I have anything better to do, so...” and she put her body on energy saving mode. Almost like sleeping.

When her dad called her from downstairs she realized she had to get up and get ready for the Zoo. In less than 10 minutes they were ready to go. But when they got out of the house and into the car she had a feeling as if they were being watched. This thought crossed her mind for a moment, which was pretty weird. She had never had this feeling while she was still... human. She ignored it and pushed the thought somewhere at the back of her mind.

At the Zoo, while watching the animals, she had the same gut feeling again. She didn't want to tell her father, not to freak him out.

The A.I. needed an ally if she wanted to fight the general. She was aware he wouldn't stop until she was either out of service a.k.a. dead or captured. They'd probably try to fix her, make her like the rest of the clones/ androids, unaware of the world, unaware of themselves. She didn't want either of the outcomes. So she had to fight back. And Masha might be the ally she so desperately needed.

"- Let's see the polar bears", Masha asked her dad. "I'd like to see them before we leave" she went on.

“- Sure, honey, whatever you want.” There was literally nothing he wouldn’t do for her. He’d even kill for her if her life (new life) depended on it. He wouldn’t lose her a second time.

While gazing at the bears, a beautiful young woman approached them. However, there was something about her, Masha didn’t know what, but there was clearly something odd about her.

“- I think you dropped this” the woman said as she handed her an old folded piece of paper.

Although she didn’t recognize it, Masha felt inclined to take it and check it out. To her and her father’s astonishment, it was an old photo of her mom, her dad and herself taken a little before everything changed and her mom died, leaving them forever... but how come this strange woman was in the possession of that old photograph?

“- I think you had it in your pocket and it must have fallen when you took out your phone earlier...” the A.I. said looking her straight in her eyes.

“- Must have...” Masha said doubting the truth of her own words. She hadn’t seen that old photo since the last time

Thank You for previewing this eBook

You can read the full version of this eBook in different formats:

- HTML (Free /Available to everyone)
- PDF / TXT (Available to V.I.P. members. Free Standard members can access up to 5 PDF/TXT eBooks per month each month)
- Epub & Mobipocket (Exclusive to V.I.P. members)

To download this full book, simply select the format you desire below

