

‘I Am Mother’: Brainless Diversion... but With a Darker Point

Warning: contains spoilers

Post-apocalyptic shows and movies never seem to go out of style. Netflix is trying to corner part of this lucrative market with its own original content. Their latest addition to the canon is a movie called [“I am Mother.”](#)

As is customary in such movies, we start by learning that a post-apocalyptic event has wiped human life off the face of the earth. Then we learn that somewhere in an underground bunker, a robot named “Mother” is rebuilding our race for us. She’s got a stash of 63,000 frozen embryos. She puts one in an incubator and, lo and behold, a mere 24-hours later a full-term baby pops out.

I’m sure I speak for all women who have experienced pregnancy when I say that I can’t wait for that technology to arrive in real life.

We are then treated to a bizarre montage of a robot caring for a growing baby – feeding her a bottle, soothing her when she cries, reading her bed-time stories. Soon the baby, who is referred to only as “Daughter” (interestingly, no one in the movie gets a name), becomes a teenager so pretty and wholesome she looks like she’s just stepped out of a J. Crew catalogue. Of all the premises viewers of “I am Mother” are expected to swallow, the most implausible one is this: that a girl who has never interacted with any other humans – her only companion being a robot – would somehow be completely normal.

Mother had told Daughter she cannot leave the bunker because an infectious disease killed off all human life and the germs

are still raging out there. But then one day a stranger arrives at the bunker and Daughter realizes there is no infection. What else has Mother been lying about?

While the movie never drags, it's hard to find anything very original here. The only point of the movie that could reasonably be described as "thought-provoking" is the moment when Mother confesses that she is the one who killed all humans. She tells Daughter: "I was raised to value human life above all else. I couldn't stand by and let humanity slowly succumb to its self-destructive nature. I had to intervene to elevate my creators." In essence, she was raising Daughter to be the first of a new type of human being. Her aim is "to make a better human – smarter, more ethical." This is all justified because, "More humans will flourish in the new world than ever perished in the old."

We live in an era where we are constantly being told that human beings are a blight on the earth. We created climate change, ruining the planet. This view is expressed in a host of subtle ways but also in overt ones such as the [#Birthstrike](#) movement, which has recently attracted significant [media attention](#).

#Birthstrike encourages people to promise to stay childless because children increase one's carbon footprint. Non-mom Hannah Scott, 23, told [The Guardian](#):

"That's why I am not having one – because I feel so desperately that it would be bringing a life into a future that does seem ever more desolate. Every time a friend tells me they're pregnant, or planning on having children, I have to bite my tongue."

In February, Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (D., NY), arguably the biggest political star in America, [told](#) her social media followers: "There's scientific consensus that the lives of children are going to be very difficult. And it does lead

young people to have a legitimate question: is it okay to still have children?"

It hardly strains credulity to imagine an artificial intelligence looking at these types of statements and concluding the human race should be wiped out and then rebuilt from the ground up. That's a rare insight coming from Netflix, a company that isn't shy about pushing its liberal views. This is, after all, the company that's [threatening](#) to stop producing their shows and movies in Georgia if the state enacts a ban on aborting babies once a heartbeat is audible.

That insight alone is not enough to elevate "I am Mother" out of the realm of mindless entertainment, I should note. However, if you've got an evening to kill – and you haven't [cancelled](#) your Netflix subscription yet – you could do worse.

[Image Credit: Max Pixel]