



The Last One: A Novel

Alexandra Oliva

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Survival is the name of the game as the line blurs between reality TV and reality itself in Alexandra Oliva's gritty, suspenseful, fast-paced debut novel.

She wanted an adventure. She never imagined it would go this far.

It begins with a reality TV show. Twelve contestants are sent into the woods to face challenges that will test the limits of their endurance. While they are out there, something terrible happens—but how widespread is the destruction, and has it occurred naturally or is it man-made? Cut off from society, the contestants know nothing of it. When one of them—a young woman the show's producers call Zoo—stumbles across the devastation, she can imagine only that it is part of the game.

Alone and disoriented, Zoo is heavy with doubt regarding the life—and husband—she left behind, but she refuses to quit. Staggering countless miles across unfamiliar territory, Zoo must summon all her survival skills—and learn new ones as she goes.

But as her emotional and physical reserves dwindle, she grasps that the real world might have been altered in terrifying ways—and her ability to parse the charade will be either her triumph or her undoing.

Sophisticated and provocative, *The Last One* is a novel that forces us to confront the role that media plays in our perception of what is real: how readily we cast our judgments, how easily we are manipulated.

Advance praise for *The Last One*

“*The Last One* seamlessly melds two of our contemporary obsessions—the threat of global catastrophe and the staged drama of reality TV—into a fiercely imagined tale of the human psyche under stress. This is an uncompromising, thought-provoking debut.”—**Justin Cronin**

“Haunting, moving, and remarkable, Alexandra Oliva's debut novel is clever in its concept and gripping in its delivery. This propulsive book is for everyone who ever thought reality television signaled the end of the world.”—**Karen Joy Fowler**

“Taut, tense, and at times almost unbearably real, *The Last One* is both a compelling read and a terrifyingly believable evocation of survival against the odds.”—**Ruth Ware**

“Like *The Hunger Games*, Alexandra Oliva's novel is page-turning and deeply unsettling.”—**Rosamund Lupton**

“Tense and gorgeous and so damn clever . . . I loved every second.”—**Lauren Beukes**

“Part wilderness-survival thriller and part dystopian pandemic story . . . a gripping portrayal of an ordinary person's evolving survival instincts as she realizes she can't trust the reality she sees.”—**Booklist**

“In her debut novel, Oliva has written a book that is clever in the best sense: she is able to skewer reality

show culture and dystopian tropes while never letting concept or critique become more important than a good yarn. The novel is thoroughly steeped in its times . . . but unlike other dystopian novels, it doesn't so much use contemporary times to warn us about potential future collapse as it shows what impact our times have on the ways we think about identity and human relationships. An astute and compelling entry into the post-apocalypse genre.”—*Kirkus Reviews*

From the Hardcover edition.

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