

# The Master's Game

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## Kapitel 3: Shoot!

Adjacent to the office room was another, way smaller one, that probably once had been some kind of storage. There also was a door leading to a tiny bathroom.

Roka was allowed to sleep here and she was glad to get at least some privacy. The room was odd, mostly empty, except for some bookshelves and an old, dusty sofa in one corner, that reminded Roka of how tired she was. Although she wasn't sure if it was actually safe to sleep at all. Not that there was much of a choice to make. Humans could only go for so long without.

Instead she took a look at the shelves. They probably had been here before the Master had occupied the building. Or maybe not, since some of them clearly didn't originate from earth. Roka recognized some titles that didn't resemble any human language and without the TARDIS she sadly couldn't read them.

Some were familiar though and she picked one up, lying down with it. Nothing better than a good story to keep one's mind busy. Not that she could concentrate on it all too much. Her thoughts circled around the Doctor and his odd behavior since they had left the Ood planet. He clearly had *awaited* to find the Master somewhere. But the other Time Lord had been a step ahead. What were his plans with the Doctor? And with earth?

It didn't really matter. Roka just had to stay awake long enough and would be forgotten. Then she could sneak outside, search for the keys and then they could leave this place.

Not for a second longer than necessary did she want to be around the Master. Like that first time she had seen him, he creped her out. It wasn't fear... just... she couldn't even put it into words, but simply thinking of the stories the Doctor had told her about him...

She shook her head and buried her nose in the book again, not wanting to think about this too much.

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A shadow leaned down and a small weight got lifted from her chest, making her eyes fling open. It took Roka some seconds to remember where she was.

"Don't sleep with them," the Master grumbled, but his voice didn't sound angry.

She yawned and rubbed her eyes, blinking perplex at the strange man in front of her. Only slowly did her mind pick up on the whole situation, and a frown etched itself deeper and deeper onto her face at the memory. She sighed and swung her legs from the sofa.

"Sorry. Wasn't planning to do so." She looked up and cursed herself for having fallen asleep.

"Six hours should be enough for your meager brain to recover." He turned the book in his hands, smiling when he read the title. "Not my fault, when you spend that time with anything else." The book found its old spot again and got placed there much more carefully than Roka would have expected. Not like a random object.

At least he seemed to value books, she thought a bit amused. But something about his words bothered her, something her still tired mind couldn't quite grasp.

"I want to test what you're capable of." The Master turned around, grinning down to her. "You won't ask any questions and just do as I say."

Roka yawned once more and nodded. Everything was better than being bored.

"Is there a coffee or two involved? I don't function properly without."

"Only a poisoned one." The mean grin got wider.

She huffed and couldn't prevent a smile. "Fine with me."

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Roka spent the whole day building seemingly random devices. Some of them were easy, others were really tiny and delicate. But with her fine motor skills none of it was much of a problem. The Master didn't tell her what the objects were for and not even what they were supposed to do, so she wasn't able to alter their functionality. At least she was allowed to use the tiny kitchen next door - no knives were in there - to get as much coffee as she wanted, earning her more than one amused look.

When the Master came to inspect her work Roka couldn't tell what he was thinking while looking at everything very carefully. It was fun to watch his face though, his forehead and nose wrinkling here and there, his eyebrows wandering up and down. His mouth moving from one side to the other, sometimes curving into a smile, sometimes into a grin.

Who are you? That thought wandered through Roka's mind over and over again. To her he was like some kind of boogey man, a creature born from tales told in the dark. But also a former friend of the Doctor. Had he always been like that? Or had something made him the way he was today? And if the later was the case, what could happen to a person to become an initiator of wars and genocides, and all the other

things.

"That's really something." The Master sat down the last object, turning towards her. "Fine, I'm impressed. A tiny little bit." He squeezed his fingers together.

Roka couldn't keep herself from having a grim smile on her face.

"Don't think too high of yourself. It's only good for a human."

"Still sounds like a compliment." Her stomach growled. She hadn't eaten anything since the last day. "Are you going to pay me for all that work? Ugh... I would kill for some pizza."

A mean grin appeared on the Master's face. Roka didn't like it.

"You're sure about that?"

"Ahh.... some toast would do it too... I guess."

"Get up." He said in such a cold tone that Roka simply did it, watching him coming closer. Way too close for her taste. "Let's have some fun, eh?" His hand vanished inside his jacket and when he pulled it out again he held a gun in it that he shoved into Roka's hands. "Shoot that guard." He nodded towards the man that guarded the door.

"What?! No!" Roka's eyes widened as she stared at the weapon in her hand.

"I even pay for the pizza, if you do." He trod beside her, and leaned down. "He's under my control. He'll even like it."

"I won't. You're mad!" Never before had she held a gun. It was heavy and cold.

"Yeah, I know." The grin on his lips was an all too proud one.

"I can't shoot anyway," Roka tried to talk her way out. Her heart was racing by now and memories flooded her mind. Ones she had tried to banish from herself, but now they all came back, making her shiver.

"Nah, that's not hard." The Master moved behind her and gripped her hand. "See, just move it up. Hold on tightly or you'll hit yourself with the recoil." Roka couldn't move. Every muscle in her body seemed to be paralyzed and her heart beat so fast it almost made her dizzy. "Now, just pull your finger back, slowly...." His voice became almost a whisper. "I hold your hand. No need to aim. Just... pull."

This wasn't happening... he couldn't make her do that. Her eyes closed on their own, she didn't want to see this. She also didn't want to hear the shot, didn't want to feel the cold metal in her hand, nor the other hand that gripped her so tightly, nor... the calm doubled heartbeat at her back. He was so close and... real. Not a boogey man, not a nightmare. Just a person.

"You're boring," he sneered disappointed and let her go all of a sudden.

Roka's hand fell down, shaking. *I'm not following his orders*, she thought. Over and over again. He was just a guy. A Time Lord maybe, but even they had weak spots. If she could just... *Breathe*, she thought to herself. *Breathe and get calm. Stop shaking.*

"Well, no food then... at least for you."

Roka spun around and held up the gun. He was so close there was no need to aim. She just pressed the muzzle against his chest. His eyes got wide and the grin faded away.

"I had really lots of time to read about Time Lord physiology," she said slowly. "And I know at least three spots to shoot you without triggering your regeneration. Including this one."

Just a person. Just a living, breathing person. *I don't know anything about you*, it raced through her mind. *But you make me do this...*

"Aaaaw, come on. Me you would kill, but not him? That's not nice." A faint smile came back to his face. "Do it." And as she didn't react he came even a step closer, pressing the gun further against him. "You can't, right?" He leaned down to her, glaring directly into her eyes, only inches away from her face. "It's easy. Just a little bow of your finger and you and your Doctor are free."

Roka stared back. Her heart pounded so fast in her chest it hurt. It would happen... again... But he wasn't any better than that other ones. *Let me forget that you're alive*, her mind begged. *Be nothing more than a tale once again, for it is your own fault.* Her finger moved backwards. There was the point. Just a little bit further and...

\*click\*

A second like an eternity passed, time stopped for a moment and only returned to normal when Roka gasped for air. Confused her gaze wandered back and forth between the gun and the Master.

Nothing had happened.

"Oh, did I forget to mention?" A very happy smile spread on his lips. "There are no bullets in it." He took the gun from her now shaking hands and put it back into his jacket. For a few moments he just coldly observed her, his gaze wandering up and down as if searching for something specific. Then he chuckled to himself. "Seems I was right. You are an interesting one..." His look was almost acknowledging for a second. "Guess I owe you pizza now. Anything specific in mind? No pineapple though, that's disgusting."