

The Room

Posted originally on the [Archive of Our Own](http://archiveofourown.org/works/4355222) at <http://archiveofourown.org/works/4355222>.

| | |
|------------------|--|
| Rating: | Teen And Up Audiences |
| Archive Warning: | Creator Chose Not To Use Archive Warnings |
| Category: | Gen |
| Fandoms: | Bad Blood - Taylor Swift (Music Video) , Agent Carter (TV) , Black Widow - David Hayter (Screenplay) |
| Relationship: | Arsyn & Catastrophe (Bad Blood) |
| Characters: | Catastrophe (Bad Blood) , The Trinity (Bad Blood) , Welvin Da Great , Lucky Fiori , Headmistress (Bad Blood) , Arsyn (Bad Blood) , Yelena Belova , Cameo of Natasha Romanoff |
| Additional Tags: | Red Room , Nanotechnology , Multiple Pov , Genetic Enhancements , Friendship , Betrayal , Fusion , Worldbuilding |
| Language: | English |
| Collections: | Crossovering 2015 |
| Stats: | Published: 2015-09-04 Words: 3,738 Chapters: 4/4 |

The Room

by [scribblemyname](#)

Summary

They've been waiting for a Widow, and finally they have one.

There are twenty-eight top operatives at the facility, more than fifty trained agents altogether in active fieldwork; a robust research and development team has output twenty new weapons and espionage technologies and adapted eleven more major baselines from Stark Industries under the guise of acquisitions from SHIELD's castoffs; the facility has been active for one fewer years than the founder's SHIELD, and there is one gender allowed into advanced training and the field. The facility has one enemy, the Red Room, and they are trained to take it down.

The Trinity

She's coming.

It resonates through the Trinity, not a thought, but a shared realization of the humming of an approaching helicopter on silent through the waiting fibers of the facility's technological network. The Trinity raises their heads in sync, feeling throughout their own room and others.

In a round chamber with full viewing of all public areas of the facility and some private, Lucky Fiori is smoking as she looks at Welvin with that skepticism only she could maintain in the face of everything the facility has learned and accomplished.

"Is it her?" Lucky asks.

The Trinity feels the question in their bones, small and more human than most would credit them.

Welvin sits enthroned in the center of his office as he answers her, "It's the one the Headmistress has been after all along. From the Red Room, gone rogue."

Gone freelance. Gone rogue. It is all the same to the KGB, and the Trinity feels intrigued. They step forward as the helicopter begins to set down, dropping its cables into the facility and commands into the Trinity's neural hookups to the same.

"Should we tell the Headmistress?" Lucky asks. She is skeptical, but she knows that even as Head of Acquisitions, she will never be allowed a 'no' on a former member of the Red Room.

It is a decent question, the Trinity weighs out and considers as they enter the observation bay of their domain. Justice and Luna run the helicopter. Domino runs the street vehicles. The Headmistress will not be aboard.

But...

They ask inside themselves with Welvin, *"Do you think she doesn't already know?"*

The Trinity waits for Luna to gently drop the helicopter down on the round landing pad atop their healing chamber. They can feel the signals and data streams feeding through the hookups into their facility and the white suits wrapped warm and snug around their limbs, telling them when the helicopter doors open, the stretcher drops down, and the ceiling over their chamber opens up to receive her.

'She' is interesting because the Trinity does not know yet who she is, only that she is Red Room and the Headmistress has been waiting for her.

She is blonde and frail-looking, fragile breaths, but all the damage is under her skin. She is set to the table, and the Shelter of the Trinity steps forward in their control center to set the

scans swinging around the Widow's body. Virtual screens light up around the room in the air, on the walls. The Trinity can hear Welvin and Lucky still in Welvin's office where he observes the entire facility as needed.

They could hear him were they not hooked into the facility with cables and natural-born technology, like the nanobots in their flesh and bloodstreams. Welvin speaks into the intercom fed into the chamber where the Widow waits.

Her eyes are open as they scan her. She can see Welvin through the window as he gives her his proposal. Revenge, not only against her former partner, Arsyn, she'd been freelancing with for the last two years, but also against her entire former organization.

"We can give you the power to defeat them, even utterly destroy them," Welvin says softly, with a bite to his words but a compelling gentleness as well.

There, the light of interest burns in her eyes as she listens, as the Trinity moves their arms into the guides in their controller room and does more than scan. They knit the bones inside her body back together around her spine carefully, following every carefully precise thought rising inside the consciousness of the Guide of the Trinity. A deep, healing hum resonates through the scanner as it passes around her body over and over to generate the osteo regeneration and brute weave what cannot be healed the normal way and let her live.

Step one complete, and before the bleeding inside her has turned to dark bruising without. Next time, the Trinity will mention to Justice and Luna not to deliver a patient with back injuries by laying them on those injured areas.

"The Red Room can't be defeated."

The patient's words come out choked and garbled. There is still blood trying to pool in her throat, her throat is still hoarse from screaming as she fell, and there are mental blocks lighting up all over her brain from speaking of the Red Room.

The Trinity looks over the scans. The Shelter of the Trinity returns the images to deeper level scanning and moves up toward the brain. The Guide of the Trinity selects and highlights the key areas to be addressed. They have seen such brain scans before.

A patient. A Black Widow.

They were freelancers then, flush with the new power of their joining, nanotechnologies riding their systems in strange but beautiful dances. Ligature tensility augmentation. Natalia. They had special joint enhancements, special nanobots designed for her body to neutralize anything that was not her body, a variation on their own. This Widow has not been so enhanced.

The Trinity returns to work. *Should we augment her?*

The question echoes through the network feeds, pouring like a digital stream into the cables and through the systems until they fall gently into Welvin's office. Lucky reads it on his screen over his shoulder and looks at Welvin, disapproving frown around her cigar.

"Meet our girls," Welvin says, not yet looking at his screen. "See what we can do."

The Power of the Trinity readies herself. They follow suit, shifting nanofunctions with her own rising power of a new generation in her blood stream, suitable for transfer. They will build a healing exoskeleton, latch onto her base humanity, fill her with their own strength to remake her damaged parts.

Shall we augment her?

It is no small difference. They need his answer.

Welvin leans forward. The Widow's head is pointed in his direction. She can see him through the glass viewer where his image floats visible inside the chamber.

"You'll heal me?" Her voice is broken. The words come out in pieces.

"We'll heal you anyway." He pushes the button for transfer, the Trinity's question sent in digital form through the facility's network to the Headmistress.

They are content to wait a moment longer. The Headmistress is the one who makes decisions, the one who knows. Chosen by Peggy Carter herself to direct the effort against Leviathan and the Red Room especially, the Headmistress knows whether to make this Widow like the best graduate the Red Room had ever seen.

The Trinity knows their work. The Power, the Shelter, and the Guide gather around her bed like flowers gathering themselves to the sunlight. Their fingers rise, nails lacquered in black nanobots, the whirl of technology rising through their bloodstreams and manufactured in their bones. The Power lays one hand gently on the Widow's shoulder.

She slowly, painfully turns her head toward the Power of the Trinity, eyes alive with interest.

The word comes back at last. *No*, the Headmistress decided. *Not unless she wants it.*

The Shelter agrees, and the Guide and Power cede to the Shelter's will. The Shelter recedes and the Power's will shifts forward to dominate. Her hand is gentle. The work begins, growing under the Power's hand.

Lucky Fiori

Lucky Fiori never quite knows how she got into this business, where questions such as 'Should we augment her?' can even be asked. She grew up simple enough, a girl half on the streets and half in organized crime from a family that knew how to work the underground. She put herself through an accounting major with her father picking up the tab grudgingly. He wanted her to take business, become a powerful woman at the top of the family hierarchy after him. She wanted to work with numbers.

These are the numbers she works: there are twenty-eight top operatives at the facility, more than fifty trained agents altogether in active fieldwork; a robust research and development team has output twenty new weapons and espionage technologies and adapted eleven more major baselines from Stark Industries under the guise of acquisitions from SHIELD's castoffs; the facility has been active for one fewer years than the founder's SHIELD, and there is one gender allowed into advanced training and the field. The facility has one enemy, the Red Room, and they are trained to take it down.

From the beginning, they sought not only to counter the Black Widows and to prevent them but to recruit one. Three have turned them down, several have died, but two years ago, an entire Red Room facility came on the Headmistress' radar when a former graduate destroyed it and razed it to the ground. The Widows were *mostly* killed. But not this one, not this one, nor the short, black-haired beauty who had taken the name Arsyn.

Former Widows are few and far between and only one considered herself strong enough to retain the name. This one left in the wake of Romanova's defection, went freelance as well, but was more careful to remain off of her former organization's radar and to not raise their ire. She'd taken the name Catastrophe.

Catastrophe was beautiful. All the Widows are. She doesn't cry out in pain as the Trinity do their work, then help her to her feet with the support of a dark blue suit they built over her body of their strange but effective technologies.

Lucky shakes her head and blows out more smoke. "She's dangerous." Lucky knows how to vet them. Lucky *knows*.

Welvin stares intently into his viewer. "Good."

Lucky shoots him a flat look.

"Put together a team," says Welvin. "Catastrophe wants the target. We want the Room."

The Headmistress found Lucky in the back alleys of London and said, "I know your work. Your contacts are what my facility needs."

She offered Lucky money and freedom from all ties to her family. She offered an opportunity to *use* the assets Lucky had uncovered over the years—the mind-merged Trinity with their

amazing nanotech and various medical degrees, the half-insane but all lethal genius assassin Crimson Curse, the probability-altering mutant Domino and her lover's range of technological capability that rivaled even that of Stark. These were only a few of the assets Lucky brought to the table.

And Lucky knew how to vet them. Had Catastrophe had Lucky looking at her partnerships before they were formed, she would not be here now, broken and healing only by the power and grace of a prodigy and enhanced.

Lucky puts together a team.

She calls out Domino from where she has been working in the garage with its large expanse of drive training cones and equipment, the obstacle course, the runways. Domino enters the good old-fashioned way, on her own two feet, helmet under her arm. It is a small breath of relief from the unnaturalness of the Trinity as they speak directly through the technology built-in to the facility and the walls themselves.

Lucky blows out smoke, looks out through the window overlooking their deadly, beautiful city, its architecture and its lights. The crime on those streets is not Lucky's to fight, a material point when her family owns half of it. The facility does not fight crime, they fight Widows and the Red Room, and that is enough for them to leave all other jurisdictions to the other departments and agencies within the Intelligence Community.

She thinks through her operatives whom she has recruited from the best and the brightest, the strongest and the most elite of the military and Department of Defense. Lucky has always known how to pick them, then bring Welvin with his silver tongue and street casual ease to talk them in.

The name forms on Lucky's tongue, a memory rising with it. "Slay."

It's Slay-Z now, technically; she's graduated to a different level of agent, the last one called in from deep cover, as she can maintain it in the face of unreasonable odds, and the last one pulled off a job or ordered into a new one because she is the best, the creature of last resort, and not to be wasted on that which someone else can do easily instead.

Domino watches Lucky with deep, dark eyes and takes in the name. Lucky knows that if anyone can pull in the team this Black Widow will want and choose, it is Domino.

Lucky shakes her head. She itches to give a different order, to call them all in and see what Catastrophe makes of it. She doesn't. She goes through the names, remembering the first times she approached each woman, the way she gathered them to her and to the Headmistress. She calls the ones who will show Catastrophe just what she has to work with—Slay-Z, Homeslice, Cut-throat, Dilemma, Crimson Curse, Mother Chucker...

"And Destructa X," Lucky finishes with. Another higher-level agent, Destructa is generally not permitted on the field where major demolitions or property damage are not desired. But her Research and Development capabilities are astounding, and Lucky wants all of their best weaponry available for this. It is an opportunity of a lifetime. She waves at Domino.

Domino nods and goes.

Black Widow

There is a long row of small, narrow beds running down each side of the gallery where they keep the young spiders. Each girl snuggles into what comfort she can as the Madame walks down the rows and turns the key in the locks at their wrists.

Yelena stretches out her arm to the headboard, stares up into the Madame's sweet smile, the snapping, cruel eyes of the Widow of her own class. Every girl here knows how Widows are born. They know that they fight and grow strong until one of them lives, one of them survives, one becomes the strongest of her sisters.

Yelena wants to ask the Madame, *Were there twenty-eight of you too?* Did she kill twenty-seven girls to become the Widow? Can Yelena ever do the same?

It is not to be asked, and so Yelena does not ask it. She closes her eyes as if in sleep, and the Madame moves on to the bed beside Yelena's.

She strains to listen and hears the rustle of sheets, the clank of the cuffs against the headboard as little Katia stretches up her own hand. Yelena hopes that Katia does not send the furtive glance toward Yelena she has been known to. It is weakness the Madame will not fail to exploit. She holds her breath and waits.

When she opens her eyes, the room is dim, and Katia's face is turned away. The Madame turns off the last lamp and glances back toward Yelena, who studies her with curious hunger. The Madame smiles.

They are friends, furtive and secret, sharing scraps of bread behind the others' backs. Yelena is careful to fight other girls than her Katenka and to teach her little Katia in secret whenever they get the chance. She wants her friend to live, and Katia lives.

They grow older, but they are still friends, still fighting the other girls, whose numbers are thinning. They trade insults and threats on the floor, but wash each other's wounds in the dark.

"You are so strong, Katia," Yelena tells her. "We will both be Widows."

"They will never let us both live," her Katenka reminds her. Katia lays down the bloody rag she's been using and lays her head against Yelena's shoulder. "There is only one Widow."

But Yelena knows something Katia does not. The Madame is a Widow, the oldest. Natalia Romanova is a Widow, the youngest, from two years before their class. There are Widows in between.

"There is more than one," she says, soft and fierce, sotto voice and unheard by any but the dark-haired girl on her shoulder.

Katia raises her eyes to Yelena's. She frowns almost delicately, but her grip on Yelena's arm tightens, and she murmurs to herself, "Widow," with the smallest of smiles on her face.

Yelena's fingers wrap around Katia's. "I will not kill you," she whispers.

They are soon to graduate. One of them is to destroy the other and both of them know it. Before that can happen, they are wakened down the long row of beds by a woman with dark red hair and a Widow's unsmiling visage.

Yelena and Yekaterina watch her undo their cuffs and ask them simply, "Do you want to live?"

Katia hesitates. Yelena knows what is at stake and answers, "Yes," quickly and puts her hand on Katia's arm.

Natalia's eyes follow the motion with a flickering gaze and the slight raise of an eyebrow. It smooths out a moment later. "Then go."

They leave with only hastily gathered weapons and supplies. The facility burns behind them with a deadly glow.

They do not claim the Widow title right away, though both could have passed, both could have finished earning it. "Let them chase Natalia while we live," Yelena says and chooses the name Catastrophe.

Katia's eyes are dark and unreadable, full of thought and a Widow's misdirection. "Isn't it what we worked so hard for?"

Yelena combs out Katia's hair gently. "Yes. And we will take it back, soon."

Katia has never had the patience necessary for their work. It is why Yelena knew Katia would never kill her in that final ceremony. But *'I will not kill you,'* Yelena had said, and now she knows that Katia always thought that is why Yelena would not be the Widow of their class.

Yelena stands up from the medical bed at the urging of these oddly familiar hands. They push together the pieces of the technology they grew over the top of their skin, and she feels resolve harden within her.

"I will see your girls," she tells Welvin, "but they do not know how to fight a Black Widow."

He leans forward on the screen and answers, "Then come, train with them, and show them what they're up against. See if they can handle it."

Oh, Katenka. You should have let me love you.

Catastrophe

Catastrophe moves through the facility like a force of nature, evaluating with harsh, unforgiving eyes every mistake and error, every risk wise and ineffectual. She sees their technology, sees the looks in each operatives' eyes, and she judges them as surely as the Madame had judged the little spiders.

Can you fight a Black Widow? Can you *become* a Black Widow?

In three days, she has seen them fight, seen their specialties, and begun to absorb the nature of her potential allies so she can mirror it back to them. The Trinity replaces her nano-clothing with the plain training clothes everyone else receives and tells her she can fight.

Welvin stands waiting.

"Homeslice," Catastrophe names the first one she wishes to work with.

He agrees readily. "We can play back the session afterward."

She fights each operative with her own weapons, becomes the living mirror of their skill, and yet...

They hold their own.

She sees Crimson Curse's livid red hair and hears her laugh as she flips through the shower of knives. It is a Widow's cruel smile on her face. That smile soon graces Catastrophe's.

When she brings the list of the team she wants to Welvin, he laughs a great, deep belly laugh, and she arches an eyebrow at him expressively and waits for him to answer.

"Lucky sure knows how to pick them," he says and he shows her the roster Lucky Fiori put together days ago. It is the same.

The Room.

No one knows how to fight the Room. The Room predates the Strategic Science Reserve and its sabotaged child, the Strategic Homeland Intervention, Enforcement and Logistics Division. The Room did not belong to Leviathan, that organization of Mother Russia so capable of utilizing the assets of other programs. The Room did not belong to the Komitet gosudarstvennoy bezopasnosti, the Committee for State Security. The Room belongs to no one but itself.

No one knows how to fight the Widows. Individually, a Widow may face superior forces arrayed against her and die, but it is rare. Black Widows have an extraordinary facility for

survival, though they lose a particular incident or altercation. They are not expected to have perfect records in the field, though the occasional Widow has achieved this mark of high stature. They are expected to be ghosts and to be surgically effective, and they are. They return to their targets and strike again. They are patient. They are spiders. They are absolutely anything they need to be.

Arsyn is not patient, perhaps less so than Katia had been as a child, biding her time to betray her only friend.

Catastrophe is patient and works with the Headmistress and her team to create the opening strike in their new battle against the Room.

No one knows how to fight the Widows except the Room (and they failed, for Natalia still lives). No one knows how to fight the Room except the Widows (for this organization exists, yet so still does the Room).

"We are fighting a Widow," Catastrophe reminds them. "If you are not attached to your hair color, you should dye it red."

Some do, with or without understanding the psychology behind it. Catastrophe will not meet Arsyn as a random operative bent on revenge. Yelena is the Black Widow of her generation, and she will prove it.

They light the fuses in the tunnels beneath the Red Room facility Arsyn is attached to. They let Destructa X wreak her worst.

Justice and Luna oversee the work on the backside of the facility, and fire billows into the sky, rockets shooting up in the distance behind Catastrophe's team.

The red hair is not lost on Arsyn. She looks at Catastrophe with finality in her dark gaze. This is the moment they have been groomed for their entire lives, and Catastrophe has kept her word, to be a Widow with allies, who does not need to kill those as strong as she.

You have been replaced, my Katenka, and I am strong.

Yelena looks at her across the gap, her and those beside her bristling with weapons as yet one more outpost of their organization burns behind them. Do you remember the night we fled the fire? Do you remember the choice Natalia gave us to live?

It is time for Yelena to take her name.

Please [drop by the Archive and comment](#) to let the creator know if you enjoyed their work!