

Speak of the Devil

an *Arrow* fanfic

by Rodo

for Jena Bartley

ROY HARPER LURKED in the shadows and watched the door of a run-down office building with bleary eyes. He wished he could crawl into his bed, but the people he was staking out did not keep regular hours. The door opened and he raised his cell phone to press record yet again. Two men left together and moved to shake hands. In that moment his phone rang and spooked them.

“Shit,” Roy cursed and moved to run. One of the men was pursuing him and catching up fast. He threw the ringing phone in a dumpster and took a right turn in hopes of shaking him off. A bad decision, he realised, when the alley ended in a dead end.

Before he could double back a big hand grabbed him and slammed him into a wall. Roy expected a punch and braced himself for the impact, but all he felt was a slight prick in his neck. Then everything turned dark.



Felicity Smoak sighed as she watched Oliver Queen and John Diggle spar with sticks. Oliver looked grim as always and attacked Dig with all his power, landing a blow on his left shoulder. Diggle grunted and blocked the next hit as if nothing had happened. He retaliated by forcing Oliver to retreat a few steps with his determined short stabs.

“Not that I don’t appreciate watching you two hitting each other while half-naked, because I do” began Felicity Smoak, sitting on her seat in front of the computer terminal, “but I don’t think the city needs any saving this evening and I think we could all use a little time off.”

Neither Oliver nor John answered. They were too engrossed in their half-naked stick fight. So Felicity resigned herself to another aggressive display of alpha male behaviour that was far more fascinating than most shows on TV these days, if she was being honest.

Oliver blocked a hit from Dig and swerved around. He tried to kick Dig’s leg out from under him, but Dig was nothing if not used to Oliver’s tactics by now. He stepped back and hit Oliver’s leg hard. Oliver winced and held up a hand. His leg wasn’t completely healed yet after last week’s fighting and God only knew what other wounds still bothered him.

Dig knew about the leg well enough – it was he who had treated the cut – and offered Oliver a hand to get up. Oliver took it, placing his weight gingerly on his injured leg.

“It seems even criminals have an off season,” commented Dig. “They’re probably still hung over from New Year’s.”

Oliver huffed slightly and dried off his face with a towel. “It’s still early.”

“And we can always come back here when there’s an emergency, right Dig?” Felicity argued like a child hoping to talk her parents into early Christmas presents.

Diggle paused to nod while shrugging on his shirt. “And we shouldn’t forget your other life, Oliver. Your mother just got out of prison, your company has problems, and your sister will be missing you too.”

Oliver said nothing to that, which Felicity took as a sign that he would relent. She stood up and gathered her things, already thinking of what she would be able to do with a free evening and no crimes or personal assistant things to take care of. She still hadn’t finished the latest season of *Game of Thrones*, hadn’t answered Barry’s New Year’s e-mail yet and she couldn’t even remember when she last talked with her mother.



The steel door to the secret basement of the club shut behind Oliver as he left after an hour of basic training. With a click that would have been audible during the day, the tumblers of the security lock fell into place while a colourful light bathed the corridor in different shades of green and yellow that danced in tune with the music. Oliver took a few seconds to conjure his public mask – that of the billionaire and playboy – and put it safely into place.

And not a moment too soon. It took no more than three breaths for Thea to appear from the manager’s office. Her face brightened slightly when she noticed him, but Oliver tensed at her appearance. She looked beautiful and far too mature as always, but there was something more to her this evening. Her mouth looked tighter than usual and she frowned, clearly worried.

“Is everything alright?” Oliver asked and cocked his head.

Thea mirrored the gesture before nodding her head slowly. “Yeah, everything’s fine, I’m probably worrying about nothing.”

Thea headed towards the back room, probably to check on the employees, and Oliver followed her, silently debating whether or not he should push her over it. Did Thea need to talk about this? Was there really a problem? Or would she prefer to ignore whatever was bothering her? His little sister was sometimes more of a mystery to him than any other person. He felt he even understood Laurel better. Still, her serious face kept worrying him too much to quell his curiosity.

“What nothing?” he cried, a shade too loud, startling some of the staff that were currently on break.

“It’s just ... I know I shouldn’t be worried and that he’s a grown man – boy – person and that he’s far better at taking care of himself than I am, but Roy didn’t show up for work today and he isn’t picking up his phone or answering my texts. That’s a bit unusual, so I called his friend Sin. She hasn’t seen him either but she said I shouldn’t worry too much since he hasn’t been arrested *again*.”

Oliver hesitated. There was something he knew about Roy Harper that his sister did not,

something that rendered him a possible liability. “Has he been acting strange lately?”

Thea paused when he asked that. Something *was* off. But Thea shook her head. “He hasn’t been any stranger than usual, I think.”

Oliver smiled, insincere as it was. Thea shouldn’t have to worry about this, not until there was an actual reason for it. “Then he probably ran into some old friends or got stuck somewhere with no reception, and tomorrow he will come and beg for forgiveness.”

At this Thea smiled a real smile. “He better be. I am his boss after all.”

“I’m driving home; do you want to come?”

“No, I want to stay until the bar closes and go over the inventory.”

His little sister was all grown up, Oliver thought not for the first time. He said his goodbyes to her and left the club through the back door where his car was waiting, but instead of taking the turn out of town, Oliver headed in the opposite direction. He needed to find Roy Harper, if just to calm his subconscious, and for that, he needed help.



John Diggle tensed and drew his gun: the door to his apartment was unlocked. In this neighbourhood, nobody left their doors unlocked and he had developed the unhealthy habit of checking twice when he left for work every morning. There had been too many break-ins lately. Slowly, making as little noise as his fancy shoes allowed he inched open the door and entered. The main room as dark except for the faint city light falling through the windows, so he turned right towards the kitchen –

“Not exactly the welcome I was hoping for,” murmured a low voice on his left. He whirled around and looked into the face of Lyla, his ex-wife, friend and lover. For a heartbeat he froze. Then he relaxed and lowered the gun.

“Don’t ever do that again.” He put it back into its holster and inhaled deeply.

“I wanted to surprise you. I did. You weren’t here and I have a key, remember? You gave it to me ‘for emergencies.’”

He did. It slowly came back to him. At the time it had seemed like a good idea. Lyla had seemed the kind of person one could trust with a spare key, unlike his *other* friends. He had not anticipated her appearing out of the blue and letting herself in with –

“Lasagne. Not the best, but it must be better than whatever you have time for after your boss finally lets you off. I thought I could bring it since I wanted to come over anyway.”

John Diggle didn’t know what to say to that. He thought of a thousand things at once, questions and memories both. There just wasn’t a rulebook about dealing with friends come wives come friends come girlfriends. In the end he settled for a simple “Thank you.”

“You’re welcome. I’ve been here for hours. What does Oliver Queen do all night that you have to guard him?”

John Diggle raised an eyebrow. “You don’t want to know. Now, what else did you have planned for this evening?”

Lyla smirked and he forgot all about the lasagne.



Of all the people Felicity expected to see when she opened the door, Oliver Queen was nowhere near the top of the list. That spot was taken by her upstairs neighbour who owned a cat that should have been named Houdini, not Fluffles. Next came delivery men, annoying children, Jehovah's Witnesses and the janitor. Then again, he probably didn't expect her to open the door in her favourite pyjamas and fluffy pink slippers. They stared at each other awkwardly for a beat before Oliver cleared his throat.

"Felicity, I need your help."

"Big surprise there," she sighed, already heading towards the bedroom to get dressed. "Just give me a minute, okay?"

Oliver opened his mouth, but she left the room before he could say anything. She decided on wearing the work clothes she had set aside for the next day, figuring that this was likely going to take a while. The last thing she needed was the people at Queen Consolidated gossiping about her showing up at work wearing last night's clothes together with her boss who hadn't changed either. God, she hated being a PA. Oliver still stood at the door when she returned a couple of minutes later.

"Alright, how about we go to your car and you tell me what's up on the way back? Oh, and we should probably stop at a diner."

Oliver nodded and went ahead while Felicity grabbed her handbag and locked the door. When she arrived at the door he even opened the door to the passenger side for Felicity like a perfect gentleman. Usually that was Diggle's thing, what with working as a bodyguard/glorified chauffeur by day.

"Now ..." she began, but Oliver cut her off quickly.

"Roy has disappeared. I need you to find out where he is, or at least where he could be."

Felicity frowned, remembering what he said to them after rescuing him from the people experimenting with Mirakuru. "You think something happened to him?"

"Or that he happened to someone," Oliver half-growled.



Roy Harper was awakened by a monotonous beeping sound. He tried to fall back to sleep, but the beeping was so annoying it could wake the dead. It only grew louder the more alert he became, ringing in his ears. He tried to cover them but could not move his hands and arms, which were shackled behind his body. The realisation fully awoke him with a start.

Roy opened his eyes to a room that managed to be both dark and light at the same time. He sat in a bright spotlight while the rest was cloaked in shadows. He winced and squinted at the shape in front of him.

"There's no use in struggling, these chains could hold an elephant," hummed a voice that he recognized but could not place. It sounded tinny, as if it came from a speaker.

Roy strained against his bonds anyway, first with strength, then with *all* his strength and anger that had been plaguing him since he awoke in Thea's bed, feeling fine when he should not. He wanted to know what they had done to him and, more importantly, who "they" were. Then he would kick their asses. The chains creaked at the strain but didn't give way and neither did the

chains that secured his feet. He was sitting on a dentist's chair that had seen better days and could not move an inch.

"What do you want with me?" Roy hissed. Next to him some metal objects clanged against each other and he heard someone else shuffling around behind him.

"You are quite an unusual human being, Mr. Harper," the voice said again, and now he could make out the man's face. It was not a face but a leathery mask that looked like death itself. Great, he thought, Darth Vader, but his bravado was a bad cover for his racing heart.

"You see," the Darth Vader continued, "the serum has a couple of side effects, the main one being death. You died, as did many of our other test subjects, but here you are, alive and looking for answers to questions you shouldn't have asked."

"Yeah, like what?" Roy joked.

"Why don't we ask the doctor that question and see what he has to say?"

The doctor said nothing. Instead he took a scalpel to Roy's arm and cut to the bone. Roy screamed and hoped to black out, but it wouldn't happen. Then the doctor took a blow torch while the masked man watched on with interest. Roy was in deep trouble this time.



"I've got it!" cried Felicity as John Diggle descended the steps to the Arrow's hideout.

Oliver had called before he and Lyla had gotten around to eating the lasagne. At least he could smell burgers and hopefully they would have left one for him.

"Got what?" Dig asked, causing both her and Oliver to turn towards him. Oliver greeted him with a nod, while Felicity gave him one of her bright smiles.

"Roy's telephone. He hasn't used it since this morning, but it's still active. I hacked the provider's service and triangulated its position. It's here –" she pointed at a map with a blinking dot in the north-west of the Glades "– and it isn't moving."

"What is that building on the left?" asked Oliver, his attention focused on the screen.

Diggle took the wrapped burger in front of him and started eating.

Felicity typed something and a list of buildings appeared. She scanned it quickly. "It's an office building owned by a subsidiary of Merlyn Global. They're renting the offices but since the quake it has been mostly vacant. Currently the only tenant is ... oh."

John Diggle leaned over Felicity's shoulder to see what the problem was. The list of current tenants that she must have "borrowed" from the city had only one entry: a non-profit led by none other than Sebastian Blood. "Somehow I don't believe that this is a coincidence."

"That the only trace of Roy Harper leads to the same charity that organised the blood drive used to abduct people to turn them into some kind of zombie hulks?" Felicity said. "I'm sure it's purely coincidental."

They both looked towards Oliver, who had not said anything yet and who still stared at the screen.

When he noticed the silence he woke from his trance. "Maybe it is time for the Arrow to pay Alderman Blood a visit."

"Maybe, but first we need to figure out who else could be involved in the disappearances.

And Oliver,” Diggle added, “There might be more men like Gold out there who could crush you in seconds.”

“Not if I get them first,” retorted Oliver. He raised his eyebrow as if he was daring them to disagree.

Sometimes it seemed as if he knew no fear, Diggle mused. A healthy dose of it would do him good, but if not even near-death could cure him of his recklessness ... “I’ll keep the first aid kit on standby.”

Dig had to smile when he heard Oliver huff at that: the young man had already half changed into his costume and disappeared a few moments later with his bow and quiver. John and Felicity followed him with their eyes.

“I hope he’s not going to get himself killed this time,” whispered Felicity. Her voice echoed between the walls of a room that suddenly seemed rather empty.

“There’s nothing we can do to stop him. The only thing we can do is keep an eye out for him. Does this intersection have a surveillance feed?”

Felicity nodded and after a minute they had a live feed on one of the screens. The camera barely caught the edge of the building, but that would have to be enough. Before he could ask, Felicity hacked another couple of traffic cameras leading to the building.

“I’ll take the current feed, you sift through the earlier recordings and see what comes up?” Diggle suggested. He went to the coffee machine that someone (probably Felicity) had already used to make a pot of strong, black sludge. He poured himself a mug and sat down next to her, his eyes scanning the five windows for anything out of the ordinary.



Starling City by night was its own world, only vaguely related to the city Oliver lived in by day. It was dark and full of dangers, especially this close to the Glades. He felt strangely at home in it, probably because it reminded him of the island, or maybe because he usually prowled it wearing the hood that felt more like his real self.

He jumped from a roof to the fire escape of the next building and continued this way. He was getting close and wanted to avoid possible sentries posted at street level. Few people bothered to secure the roofs as yet, which suited him just as well.

With a last jump he landed on the roof of the office building which so far seemed rather unremarkable. Nobody was out on the street in front of it, nor in the alleyways behind it.

“You’re getting close,” said Diggle over the radio. “A couple of yards in front of you.”

A couple of metres in front of him there was no more roof and below lay a dirty alley with two dumpsters, and no Roy. Oliver shot an arrow with a sturdy wire attached to it into a wall and lowered himself to the ground in seconds. He could not see anything new from this point of view and after a short scan of the ground he opened the first dumpster. The smell of rotting food bothered him little and he quickly found what he was looking for: a cell phone. He took it and turned it on.

The last thing Roy had done with it was take a video of what appeared to be the back entrance to the building. He sent a copy to Felicity. It showed a couple of sketchy and surprisingly

bulky men in dark jackets entered and left until he saw a face that he recognized, but could not place. The man was young with short dark hair and a square jaw. He looked more respectable than the others too.

“Felicity, could you run face recognition software on the last one?”

He heard her affirming hum and the tapping sound of her fingers flying over the keyboard. Oliver waited impatiently and looked around for any clues that he might have missed, but there were none. No signs of a struggle, but that wasn't much of a surprise with concrete walls to both sides. Whoever took Roy probably dumped the phone so that nobody could trace him and he had no chance to call for help.

“Got it!” Felicity cried excitedly. “You're looking at Officer Daily, he's a policeman. He was with Detective Lance when he went for Gold.”

And thus probably the reason Detective Hilton was now dead and buried while Laurel's father blamed himself for it, Oliver thought. He looked at the man's face again and anger rose in him. He took a deep breath and pushed it aside. He had no time for that now. “Can you give me his address?”

Felicity did, so Oliver resumed his journey over the roofs mulling over his own part in Hilton's death. Again he thought of Tommy and how he had sacrificed himself for someone else, while Oliver had killed and hurt more people than he could count. He kept surviving while everyone else did not. There had to be a reason for it. If there wasn't he was a terrible human being.

Daily was sleeping in his bed when Oliver broke in through the window. He did not notice a thing until Oliver turned on the light switch and his bedroom suddenly became bright. And while Daily startled from his sleep, Oliver nocked an arrow and lowered his hood.

“What –!” Daily murmured before spying the arrow and freezing.

“Roy Harper,” the Arrow growled. “Where is he?”

Daily's eyes shot back and forth as if he hoped to find a weapon, but none presented itself. “I don't know what you're talking about,” he protested. His left hand slowly disappeared under the covers.

Oliver loosed the arrow and pinned Daily's hand to the mattress. The man howled and screamed and clutched his wrist with his other hand, but Oliver simply nocked another arrow. “You know what I am talking about. And if you insist on playing dumb ... you have more than one hand and only need your mouth to speak.”

Daily glowered at him like a petulant child, but his breathing didn't calm and with every second the pain would become worse. Oliver was tempted to put another arrow into the man and tightened the string.

“Okay!” Daily screamed, suddenly defeated. “A warehouse near the wharf. Used to belong to Merlyn Global.”

Oliver loosed the arrow and it landed between the man's legs. Then he jumped out the window onto the fire escape and made his way down quickly. A car came to a screeching halt next to him and the passenger door flew open before he could react. It was Diggle.

“I thought you could use some backup on this one,” he explained.

It took Felicity nearly half an hour to narrow down the possible locations. The economy, the quake and the subsequent chaos at Merlyn Global had left quite a few warehouses unoccupied. In the end, it was pure luck that she found one that suddenly used a lot more electricity despite being empty. While they were waiting, Diggle took out one of his sudoku puzzles and distracted himself as best he could from Oliver's impatience.

Of course, as soon as Felicity informed them of her findings, Oliver jumped out of the car. Diggle followed him at a more sedate pace, watching the shadows like a hawk in case another Gold was waiting for them. Oliver might take super strong fighting machines in stride but Diggle felt the aches in his entire body when he remembered his run-in with one.

When they approached the building, Diggle lowered his ski mask and melted into the shadows a few steps behind Oliver. They could see the guards slouching in front of the building and the semi-automatic guns they were carrying. A direct approach would lead to more bullet holes than was healthy.

"There's a back entrance," whispered Felicity as if she was there with them and not in her chair back at the cave.

"You take that one," murmured Oliver. "I'll take care of these two."

"You sure you can handle them?"

Oliver glared at him. "They won't expect me to work with a partner. You'll get inside and look for Roy. I'll create a diversion."

Diggle sighed and turned around, drawing his gun. He advanced carefully around the building until he reached the stairs that led up to a door on the second floor. Another guard was posted there, but he was easily and stealthily dispatched: Diggle simply grabbed the man by the head and put pressure on his jugular to cut off the blood flow to the brain.

The guard struggled for a few moments before turning limp in Diggle's arms. He put him down carefully and walked up the metal stairs dreading every sound.

Something exploded on the other side of the warehouse and Diggle flinched. Oliver's distraction was anything but subtle.



Roy's throat felt as if it was on fire when he came to. He couldn't tell if it was because of the screams or because of something that they had done to him while he was out. He hoped it was the former since there had to be a limit to what his strange new healing abilities could do and he wasn't very eager to find it. So far he found out that superficial damage to the skin – whether it was caused by fire or a knife – healed quite fast, while cuts to the bone took longer. When they did that he thought they couldn't come up with anything worse until they covered his head with a sheet of plastic and watched him suffocate.

"Quite extraordinary," a voice remarked. It must have been the doctor for it was not distorted.

"Indeed," the Darth Vader impersonator said. "He is even more resilient than Gold. Is it because he died?"

Roy heard a rustling of the doctor's overcoat. "Possibly. It could also be a question of age. I need more information to be sure."

“Ah, I see you are awake,” the man said, addressing Roy and not his colleague. Roy answered him with a glare.

“Do you know how fortunate you are, Mr. Harper? You are more than human now, stronger and faster than three men. You were looking for information on what happened to you when we found you. Well, that is what we did: the serum we injected you with is quite remarkable and aptly named ‘Miracle’. You should be grateful for the chance we gave you. The chance to be something more than a petty criminal preying on the weak. The chance to be a part of something great.”

Roy did not want to be the part of something these men considered “great” and hoped that his eyes conveyed as much. His mouth was dry and too hurt to answer in any other way. Super strength was all well and good as long as you didn’t have to worry about hurting your girlfriend while holding her and accidentally ruining the furniture. Clearly these freaks had never considered the more mundane aspects of what their drug did.

“Fuck you,” he croaked at last. “You and your ‘Miracle.’”

The masked man’s sigh sounded like a rattling trash can. “So be it. Please continue, doctor.”

The doctor came closer and took one of his fingers. Roy struggled and screamed but nothing deterred the doctor and his scalpel came closer. An explosion rang through the building.



The two guards didn’t know what hit them. One minute they were standing on their post and the next they were surrounded by smoke, coughing furiously until they lost consciousness. Oliver waited for the smoke to dissipate before aiming one of his explosive arrows at the door. The projectile hit its mark with a loud explosion that left the door ajar and black with soot.

The first man emerged from the building a scant few seconds later, looking around in confusion before Oliver struck. He shot the man in the leg and knocked him out for good measure. Just then another man appeared and raised his gun. He stood only a couple of feet away and Oliver quickly stepped out of the line of fire before disarming him and depositing him next to his friend.

So far, so good, Oliver thought. None of these men were injected with the serum, but as he entered the building and waited for his eyes to adjust to the murky lighting, somebody tackled him to the ground with enough force to knock the wind out of him. Oliver struggled to his feet and looked at his opponent.

The man was huge, though not as huge as Gold, and covered in prison tattoos and scars. His nose had been broken and reset too many times and his eyes were full of malice. Without hesitation Oliver shot him in the shoulder, but the wound seemed a mere scratch to him. Instead of slowing him down it seemed to anger him so much he grabbed one of the heavy metal bars stacked on the side and hurled it at Oliver, forcing him to retreat. Then he took another and Oliver loosed arrow after arrow whenever he wasn’t ducking until he stood beneath an abandoned crane with a couple of crates swinging back and forth precariously.

Before he could fully form a plan, his enemy grabbed a steel pipe and swung it at Oliver as if it weighed nothing. He dodged the blow as best as he could, but Oliver wasn’t fast enough. The end of the pipe hit his ribs and threw him to the side. He regained his balance just in time to

throw a knife at the rope securing the crates. They tumbled down one by one, burying Prison Tattoos beneath them. The last Oliver heard of him was an angry scream.

But he had no time to linger: he had to find Roy and Dig. A muffled noise alerted him to another scuffle on the far side of the building and he ran towards it. He caught a glimpse of a fleeing man in a white coat and let him leave through the open back door. Instead, Oliver ran towards the open door the man in the white coat must have come from and saw two unconscious men and two masked men fighting with their fists for something on the floor – a gun. Oliver kicked it away and drew his bow, aiming it at the man with the skull mask. Out of the corner of his eye he saw Diggle nod towards him in thanks and limp towards the chair in the middle of the room that secured a very frightened and very angry Roy Harper who struggled against his restraints despite being an unhealthy shade of pale.

Good, Oliver thought; he didn't know how Thea would deal with the loss of her boyfriend after everything she had been through in the last years. He didn't want to know either. Oliver focused instead on the man sitting on the floor. He stared at him, trying to get a read on whoever hid beneath the brown leather. Oliver noticed the cut of the suit the man wore – he was clearly accustomed to wearing them and it fit well, as did the wine red shirt. Suddenly the man's head jerked to the side and Oliver realised just a second too late what that meant: the crates had merely slowed Prison Tattoos down, not taken him out.

For the second time that night Oliver felt himself flying through the air. He lost his grip on his bow and smashed into a cabinet. It felt as if he was being hit by a train. His shoulder wouldn't move and he could barely breathe. He must have broken a couple of ribs. Oliver coughed and forced himself to forget about the pain, but when he tried to stand up he felt faint and his vision went black. He tried to shake it off when another body crashed into another piece of furniture somewhere to his left. Roy Harper screamed.

However the first thing Oliver could see once he regained his eyesight were the two men standing over him. The men with the mask eyed him before turning to his companion.

"Leave him alive. Kill the two others," he ordered, before walking out of Oliver's field of vision.

Prison Tattoos grinned at him and kicked him in the gut and Oliver doubled over again. He had to do something. Another kick. Diggle and Roy were in danger and he was the only one who could help them. He had to get up –

A dull metallic thump rang through the room and a huge form crumpled to the floor beside him. Oliver looked directly into the man's empty dead eyes and saw the deformed mass that had once been his skull. With one last look he saw Roy Harper standing above them with a dented gas tank in his hands and a murderous look on his face. Then he passed out.



Roy carefully put down the dented tank and retched. He had done that. He had killed somebody. His breath hitched and he felt himself panicking before he realised what he was doing. He did not have time for this. Who knew if the guy with the mask would call back-up and how many of his goons were still around. And so he concentrated on his hands and tried to stop himself from shaking. He also counted his fingers, just to be sure.

He needed a phone or at least a weapon and so he knelt down next to the vigilante and wondered where he would hide both. Roy noticed that the green hood had fallen back and was no longer concealing half his face and that he wore a mask now. He was tempted, there was no denying that, and he was curious, but the man had saved his life and deserved his respect. He had also shot him when he didn't do what the vigilante wanted, another part of Roy argued, and so he removed the mask.

Roy gasped when he saw the face and recognised it. He hadn't expected the vigilante to be someone he knew, much less Thea's weird but sort of okay brother. Oliver Queen had never struck him as the type to dress up in a costume to fight crime.

And while he could abandon the vigilante and hope that he could take care of himself, he couldn't do the same to Thea's brother. He glanced at the other man and based on the colour of his skin and his size this had to be Oliver Queen's bodyguard. It occurred to Roy that he, Officer Lance and the bodyguard might not be the only ones who helped him. If he could just find a phone number, anything. Roy searched the unconscious Oliver's body and found knives, an earplug, a staggering array of arrows and finally a phone that was tucked into a hidden pocket inside his jacket. His expertise as a thief paid off for once.

There were no numbers saved on the phone and so he simply hit redial. The call was answered immediately.

"Thank God, Oliver. I was so worried. I heard crashing and screaming and then nobody answered," babbled a woman on the other end of the line.

"I'm not Oliver," he said. Roy found he sounded surprisingly calm, considering.

"Oh ... In that case, could you just forget everything I just said?"

Roy snorted. "No. Who are you?"

"Who are *you*," the woman shot back. Roy was reminded of kindergarten.

"Roy Harper."

The woman remained silent for a few moments before speaking up timidly. "Are Oliver and Diggle okay?"

"Unconscious but alive. Now what am I supposed to do with them? I can't call the paramedics or the police."

"Could you take them to the club?"

"The club?"

"Yes. You know, the one you work for? I'll open the back entrance for you. Oh, Felicity, by the way."

And with that Felicity hung up. Ten minutes later Roy found himself in a parking lot near the warehouse, heaving two grown men into a stolen car, cursing the whole way. He felt grateful for his new strength, at least.



Felicity Smoak felt the completely irrational need to cross her arms in front of her and tap on the floor with her foot like a disapproving mother. Probably because she felt the same exasperation mothers must feel when their children get into stupid fights and end up in the hospital. Only her

children were older than her and currently not inside a hospital, but rather lying on two metal slabs that she hoped were cold and uncomfortable. Jesus, how long would it take them to wake up?

Oliver groaned and a big weight was lifted from Felicity's heart. She watched as he slowly blinked and winced at the harsh electric light. Then he saw her and frowned.

"Felicity."

"Oliver."

"What happened?"

Felicity pursed her lips and crossed her arms. "Besides you and Dig getting beat up by a super strong super villain again?"

Oliver glared. How he managed to do that in his state she did not know, but somehow, he did.

"Well, I tried to reach you for ages. Then I get a call from Roy telling me he found out who you are – yes he did – and then he brought you here, which you should really thank him for because I would not have been able to carry both of you down here."

She saw the wheels turning behind his eyes and noticed she was tapping her foot. She stopped, figuring that the crossed arms conveyed enough disapproval.

"Where is he?"

"Upstairs, actually, making up some ridiculous excuse about why he was AWOL for the past twenty or so hours. I hope he is better at that than you are, or else your sister will be down here in about five minutes."

"She won't," Roy said as he walked down the stairs. "She's gone home to sleep."

Oliver tried to sit up and grimaced in pain. In spite of that he moved further, until his back was straight and his legs hung off the slab. He glared at Roy. Roy glared back. And Felicity looked from one to the other and wondered if she should say something. She was quite sure that Roy would not hit Oliver, at least not in his condition, or he probably wouldn't have brought him back, she hoped.

"Look," Oliver growled, but was interrupted.

"Could you two do this another time," groaned Diggle. Felicity shot him a quick grin and he curled his lips in acknowledgement. "We have bigger problems."

They all stared at him. He had a point. They were hurt and hadn't slept and she was expected at work in five hours. Probably four hours by now, she corrected.

"When we were going through the surveillance feeds of the office Felicity noticed something."

Felicity remembered what he was referring to. "Right," she said. "I saw Daily talking with Sebastian Blood. I know it might mean nothing, he could just be an acquaintance or maybe he gave him a parking ticket, but ..."

Oliver sighed and stood up gingerly. "But he's been involved with the blood drive as well. We'll have to look into him. And you –" He looked at Roy. "– are not going to do anything stupid."

As Roy protested, Felicity shared a meaningful glance with Diggle. It seemed as if their private lives would have to wait. She'd look into watching *Game of Thrones* while running algorithms and hacking police servers.