Solution for 4.3 Bastioned Misarrangement (Answer = RUFUS)

Note that the title of the puzzle contains 23 letters (this is the "room"). Take letters from it according to the numbers, to generate the string RED NAME AGAINST BRIMSTONE. Brimstone is SULPHUR, which becomes SULFUR after applying Americanising steak. Removing Elle gives SUFUR, and going "against" this (that is, backwards) gives RUFUS, which is a name that means "red" and describes several Roman generals and a well-known musician.

Author's remark: Several teams complained that the usage of the word "against" was against (no pun intended) standard conventions for cryptic clues. This was intentional. There is no intuitive reason why "against" should be allowed to mean "adjacent" (as in, against a wall) but not "backwards" (as in, against a current). The latter is a perfectly valid meaning of this word, and fits in with brimstone, a substance most commonly seen in a powdered form governed by fluid mechanics.

It is a design choice to emphasise intuitive thinking outside the box over systematic applications of known rules, which is exactly what cryptic clue conventions are. At the end of the day, we much prefer a puzzle that is uniformly hard for everyone rather than one which is only hard to those who do not happen to know certain arbitrary conventions.

It was unfortunate that the answer encoding part turned out to be much harder than the actual puzzle part; it must be conceded that this is a major flaw with the puzzle. This remark is directed at the non-conformity rather than difficulty of the encoding.