

Starting the Cycle

Posted originally on the [Archive of Our Own](https://archiveofourown.org/works/3510848) at <https://archiveofourown.org/works/3510848>.

Rating:	Teen And Up Audiences
Archive Warning:	No Archive Warnings Apply
Category:	F/M
Fandom:	Transistor (Video Game)
Relationships:	Red/Blue , Red/Transistor , Red/Boxer , Asher Kendrell/Grant Kendrell
Characters:	Asher Kendrell , Grant Kendrell , Red (Transistor) , Transistor - Character , Sybil Reisz , Royce Bracket
Additional Tags:	ok so royce isn't mentioned by name
Language:	English
Stats:	Published: 2015-03-09 Words: 1,944 Chapters: 1/1

Starting the Cycle

by [angelheaded_hipsters](#)

Summary

“Oh, come on, you don’t need to buy flowers for me!” Despite her protest, she was obviously pleased. “And weren’t you supposed to be working tonight, anyways?” Blue shrugged and held up his free hand to display his boxing bandages. “Last minute change of plans.”

Notes

See the end of the work for [notes](#)

Red sighed and picked up the mug of honey-lemon one of the staff had left on her dressing table. It was perfectly warm, and she sipped at it gratefully, idly running one hand through her hair to dislodge at least some of the hairspray.

There was a knock at the door. Red turned, preparing to gather her dressing gown closed, but stopped and grinned as she recognized the fingers curling around the edge of the doorframe.

“Hey, you!” she exclaimed, delighted and surprised. “What’re you doing here?”

“Just thought I’d stop by. You were great tonight.” Blue stepped into the room, holding out a bouquet. They were calla lilies, the kind with sea green stems that Red loved so much.

“Oh, come on, you don’t need to buy flowers for me!” Despite her protest, she was obviously pleased. “And weren’t you supposed to be working tonight, anyways?”

Blue shrugged and held up his free hand to display his boxing bandages. “Last minute change of plans.”

Red stood and crossed to him, relieving him of the flowers with a kiss. She carefully slid them into one of the vases around the room—she kept several on hand for admirers—and then turned back to Blue, arching an eyebrow.

“You’re not one to skip out on work. What’s up?”

Blue sighed and ran a hand through his hair. “Sybil’s here. She’s been at all your shows lately.”

“You keep worrying about her; I don’t see why! She’s nice! And that’s all. Nice.” Red was more confused than angry, but she knew how touchy the subject of Sybil made Blue. When Sybil had started hanging around the concert halls Red frequented, Red had confided to Blue about the times early in her college days when she’d met up with Sybil in the stacks of Traverson library. Sybil had been far more interested in Red than Red was in her, and Red thought she had made this quite clear. She knew Blue wasn’t exactly jealous of Sybil at this point, but he was wary—too wary, in Red’s opinion.

“I know she’s nice. But she’s got this group she’s been bringing to the shows, too...”

“So what’s your point? Are you here to protect me?” Red asked this in a tone free of malice, but with a bit of frustration.

“No, I just...” Blue trailed off again, shifting awkwardly from foot to foot, the old wood floor creaking a bit under his weight.

“Come here,” commanded Red. Blue crossed the room to her outstretched arms. She stretched up to kiss him, tangling her fingers in his hair. “Mm... I’m glad you came, Blue. Really, thank you.”

“Really?”

“Of course. I sang Paper Boats tonight, and I wanted you to hear that.”

“It was beautiful.” Blue murmured simply. They kissed again, leaning into each other more. She began to unwrap the bandages from around Blue’s hands as he started kissing the top of her head, working his way downward slowly but hungrily. The unwrapping was a sort of ritual undressing, although, she thought, she wouldn’t mind being further undressed. Red prayed in the back of her mind that no theatre employees would barge in. Just as she reached up to unclasp her shawl, Blue’s bandages on one hand half unwound, there was another knock at the door. The couple sprang away from each other hastily, pawing at their hair and slightly rumpled clothes. Blue ducked behind a clothes rack, and Red took a deep breath before calling out:

“Who is it?”

The door swung open with a soft creak, and Sybil Reisz stood in the hallway. She was illuminated from behind by a soft green glow from a source Red could not place, and Red could not help thinking, with a small intake of breath, that Sybil looked lovely tonight.

“Sybil! What can I do for you? I trust you enjoyed the concert?”

Sybil stepped into the room, and Red noticed that there were three men flanking her, previously hidden in the dark of the corridor. “It was lovely, Red. Such talent. It’s a shame, really.” A shame? Red opened her mouth to question Sybil, but Sybil was not finished. “I told my fellows—“ and here she gestured behind her to her companions, “I asked them, truly, isn’t there another way we could do this? We could, I said, use your considerable prowess to augment our voice, when the time came. But the Camerata has to be precise. Can’t leave any loose ends, you know.”

Something was wrong. Sybil’s suave tone barely masked a menace that Red did not fully understand. Red’s heart beat in her throat, and as her eyes darted around the room, she realized she recognized one of the men in Sybil’s posse. She didn’t know his name, but he had been a year ahead of her at Traverson, and she was fairly positive that he was a certified genius.

“I have to admit I have absolutely no idea what is going on,” Red laughed nervously.

The man smiled. “Oh, Red, darling. You won’t really need to have any idea about anything in a moment. It is a shame, as Sybil said, but so necessary.” He stepped further into the room to stand beside Sybil, his hair turning from pale blond to a fiery color in the warm light. The older man behind him was no longer so concealed, and Red got a better idea of what had been casting the green glow on Sybil in the hallway. The older man himself was glowing with it, and drew from behind his back a giant, glowing object, which he held with surprising ease by a long handle.

“The Transistor,” said the younger man, smiling again. “I hope you will enjoy your stay.”

The older man hefted it above his head. Red was dimly aware that her breath was coming in gasps now, and she was backing up frantically towards a clothes rack.

“Sybil—?” She didn’t know what she wanted to say. And then: “Blue?”

The younger man opened his mouth, perhaps to stop his older companion, but he had already released the weapon. Red cried out as she saw it hurtling towards her, and then a large, dark shape passed between her and it.

“BLUE!” she screamed, and then everyone and everything disappeared in a flash of white.

Where was she? Where was she. It was dark. Of course, it was night out. Something was glowing nearby, a blue glow, but different from that of that giant sword. It was a Terminal. She almost laughed at the sight of it; it was asking her to sign a petition. It was so matter-of-fact.

Ok, she would sign. Her breath was coming back to her, short panicked gulps again. The petition was something about a bridge to Fairview. Yes, that was good. *Would you like to add a message to your signature?* Her fingers trembled frantically over the keys. *Help*, she typed. What else was there to say?

She gasped, then, as a voice echoed out in the silent street. “What... where... how... no. Hey, Red! Where are you...! Where are you? Where are you...”

She knew the voice. She wanted to cry, to scream for him. *Blue!* She mouthed frantically. Oh no. Oh no! Why couldn’t she call to him! He kept talking and she hurried away from the Terminal, searching for the source of the voice. She kept tripping over her goddamn dress; her legs felt as though they were moving slow as molasses.

“Don’t be gone, please don’t be gone. I’m over here. I can’t... I’m here. I’m over here, I’m over here. I’m... still here.” He paused, and then continued, almost threateningly. “Look, if she’s hurt, if she’s hurt I’ll... I’ll what... I’ll what? I’ll nothing.” I’ll nothing? What did that mean, she wondered. Where was he?

“Stuck, I’m stuck, inside, am I... inside... that... thing? Inside it. What is all this? There’s nothing—...Nothing.” Stuck? Inside that thing? Red wanted to scream; she could feel it bubbling inside her throat but, again, it wouldn’t come out. She had to find him.

“No... Wait... I’m ok... I think? I’m ok, I’m... still here. So it could be worse! It could be worse...” He was alive! She felt a surge of hope swell inside her.

“But where is she. Where is she, where is she. Where are you. You were right there, we were both right there, you and me both we just, come on just where’d you go—Hey!” And there he was, slumped against a low wall. She had found him, and he was speaking, he needed to know where she was! “That you?”

She walked towards him as quickly as she could in that dress. Of course it was her, why couldn’t he see...?

Oh. The sword, there it was, pinning him to the wall, and as he muttered frantically, she could see it light up. He was inside? That was him? The sword? Then technically, he was... She couldn't bring herself to think the word. She knelt down beside him.

"Look at you." There was that awe that was always present in his voice when he first saw her. Her heart was so full at that moment she thought it might burst and come spewing out her mouth. "You're alive. Me I'm not so sure. Could use your help." Her hands fluttered around the hilt of the sword; she wasn't sure where or what he was anymore. "Hey, say something already. Say something will you?" Red gulped, let out a tiny, audible sob. "...Oh no," Blue said, and then Red's vision darkened at the edges and she could feel herself falling.

"...Hey, you. Come on now, you can get up."

Red's eyes blinked open, and she pushed her hair out of her face. For a moment, she was wildly disoriented, wondering where her bed had gone, and then everything hit her with the force of a Junction Jan's delivery truck.

"Hey now, don't panic. I'm here; you're here. You fell on me... well, my body, so you didn't get bruised up too badly I don't think. You've only been out for about a half an hour. They took your voice, Red. And my body, I guess." Red sat up slowly, moving off of Blue's cold legs to slump next to him against the wall. "Listen to me, Red. We've gotta do something here. Stay focused." Red kicked at her dress, which had fairly well tied itself around her ankles. She had to get rid of some of that length.

Blue seemed to read her body language, though what eyes he used now she wasn't sure. "There's a knife in the breast pocket of my jacket. That little pocketknife you got me. You can hack some of that off with it."

Numbly, she fumbled in his jacket pocket and extracted the knife. Her hands were still shaking, but she slashed her dress to mid-thigh with relative efficiency.

"That's my girl. Now, we've gotta go after these guys, right? Sybil and the rest." Red nodded; she'd been thinking the same thing, despite her panicked haze. "You're gonna have to get me out of this body. I'm in the sword now, so don't you worry."

Red swallowed hard and stood up. She was pleased to note that the swaying had stopped, although she was hit by an inexplicable and nauseating sense of déjà-vu. She looked down at the Transistor's handle and felt the impossible enormity of the task stretching out before her.

"Hey Red," said Blue, the barest hint of an encouraging smile in his voice. "We're not gonna get away with this, are we?"

End Notes

Yeah, I used some dialogue from the game. All of Blue's dialogue from the second section. Had a fun time incorporating it, honestly! All the other writing is my own.

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