

## Preamble

Posted originally on the [Archive of Our Own](https://archiveofourown.org/works/6126835) at <https://archiveofourown.org/works/6126835>.

|                  |                                                                |
|------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|
| Rating:          | <a href="#">General Audiences</a>                              |
| Archive Warning: | <a href="#">No Archive Warnings Apply</a>                      |
| Category:        | <a href="#">Gen</a>                                            |
| Fandom:          | <a href="#">Transistor (Video Game)</a>                        |
| Characters:      | <a href="#">Royce Bracket</a> , <a href="#">Grant Kendrell</a> |
| Additional Tags: | <a href="#">Pre-Canon</a>                                      |
| Language:        | English                                                        |
| Stats:           | Published: 2016-02-28 Words: 1,684 Chapters: 1/1               |

# Preamble

by [ceiland](#)

## Summary

Royce introduces Grant to the Transistor, and the first two members of the Camerata plan for the future of their organization.

## Notes

I'm hoping I got the timeline on this right; it all seems like speculation to me. The game leaves a lot of things open, which is both useful and complicated for fic writing. The way I figure this, it'd be set just around after Grant and Royce decided to form the Camerata (and as stated in Grant's profile, it was just the two of them at first). Sybil isn't mentioned (unfortunately) because I've always headcanoned her as having been brought into the Camerata by Asher. I went through the archive to make sure there was nothing too much like this already out there, but, my apologies if there are (I could always be wrong).

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

The Transistor. There's a solid heft to it as he holds it, heavy with the weight of metal and *potential* (like a loaded gun, he thinks, but not nearly so limited in purpose), and his hand trembles as he raises it for another better look. Light glints off the red circle in the center, too much like an eye for comfort. The frame of it glows a soft electronic blue, warm to the touch. Impressive—otherworldly, almost, a tangible result to so much work, so much time spent pouring over pages of numbers and ideas. Royce props it up on his shoulder.

"This is what I've been working on in the meanwhile," he says, nervous in a way.

"What is it, exactly?" Grant asks, cautious interest unhidden in his gaze. How can he explain without diverging into explanations loaded with math and theories? A controller. A solution to their problems, God willing—although he never did take too much stock in things like that. This, holding the Transistor with all its possibilities in hand, feels almost godlike in itself.

"Exactly? I don't know." Plenty of ideas on it, but nothing certain. After a moment passes he realizes maybe Grant didn't mean *exactly*. "A part of the city, I think," he continues, idly drumming his fingers on the handle of it. "A part of what controls it—controls Cloudbank."

A little presumptive to speak the thought aloud, but then he's done his research. Grant's brows shoot up before furrowing into attentive concentration. "How did you—is it safe?" "It isn't *unsafe*." Probably. The side edge of the dull blade is warm on his shoulder even through layers of fabric. The whole thing is teeming with energy. Alive, almost, in the same way as the city itself is alive.

A frown. Grant steps closer, rests a hand on his side of the table. "May I see it?" "No." It's spoken instinctively, tumbled out in a rush. Firmer than his voice usually gets. Royce tightens his grip on it. "You'd be, ah, it would switch users. From me to you. I'm not sure if that, if that would be a good idea." Nerves flare up suddenly—wrong way to say it? Speaking has never come easy to him, and it's harder over something so major as this. Grant nods, no visible signs of disappointment. "Fair enough." He looks down at the red center of the Transistor as he talks. "Is it something we can use?" *We*—the Camerata. Just the two of them, as of yet. A cleverly faceted name. Not his idea, but then, he thinks this rather makes up for it.

"Let me show you. You might want to, uh. Stand clear." There's a clear space in the center of the studio, prepared just for this demonstration. Grant steps around to the other side of the table, leaving as much space as possible between them for Royce's sake. A deep, shaky breath—focus—and he does it. Summons the Process, or at least, part of it. A disjointed thing with lithe, sectional little tripod legs it skitters around on before stopping and seeming to watch the both of them with a glowing red eye of sorts. Not dissimilar to the one on the Transistor; he's found it to be a common feature in all of the units he's discovered thus far. Startled, Grant takes an instinctive step back.

"A robot. Alright." There's questions in his tone. Royce hopes he can provide answers. "Of a sort. You've wondered how exactly the city keeps up with the whims of the people? Buildings get built fast and come down fast. Faster, really, easier to destroy than it is to create—" he

stops himself, knows how easy it would be to go off on a tangent. “It’s called the Process. That right there is part of it. A very small part of it, not so important in the grand scheme of things, you’d think. But then, people say the same thing of individual, individual, ah, votes.”

A long exhale. Grant looks between the process in front of them and Royce himself, an unreadable expression on his face. People, like words, have never been his forte, and feelings written in expressions are as hard for him to read as tones written in words. It’s easier with Grant, as familiar as they are, but that’s a very particular look. Amazement, perhaps, or fondness.

“I think you’ve outdone yourself on this one, Royce.” The process stays put in front, watching without moving, standing almost at attention as though waiting for a command. He uses the Transistor to make it vanish, and it leaves as quickly as it came. “We could use it to make a change,” Royce says, quieter. “Make a change, something lasting. A legacy, in our own way.” Grant smiles, a new light in his eyes. Passion that’s been gone for a long while. He used to be so determined, so fervent in his work and ideals. Royce wonders when exactly that faded, when he became so jaded by the city driving itself in circles. He’s never been the sentimental sort, but—Grant is his oldest friend. It’d be a lie to say he didn’t care, contrary to popular belief.

He sets the Transistor back down on the table. “That’s all I had to show. I doubt you’d be interested in the, ah, math, the work behind all of it? There’s plenty.” He takes a seat at the table. Grant shakes his head before following suit. “I think I can do without the math, thanks.” A pause before he continues, as though he’s trying to figure out how to phrase something. “There’s something I’ve been meaning to ask. It involves the future of our plans.”

Royce looks down at the Transistor, studying the surface of it some more. He’s never much cared for people asking questions in that manner. “Hm?” Grant glances away for a moment, almost apprehensive, before looking back. “I’ve been thinking about this for a while. I was wondering whether or not it would be unwise to invite Asher to the Camerata.”

He stops. Looks up, taking a long breath through his nose. Royce can’t say he’s surprised; as much as he’s been hearing of the man from Grant lately, he’s almost been expecting it. He takes a second to think about it. It would add a far higher magnitude of risk—worse, now, after his current discovery. The last thing they need is their plans ruined because Grant happened to get a little sappy. And if Asher doesn’t agree, takes a look at the offer and turns it down, it’s not as if he’s not in a position where he can’t easily leak it to the public. What a media scandal that would make, he thinks: the two of them getting caught red-handed in something like this. But then, if he *agreed*... having a hand in the media has a lot of potential uses. And it would certainly make Grant happier.

“I don’t know, Grant,” he says, pulling his cigarette case out of his coat pocket instinctively. “I’m not the one dating him.” Grant frowns, about to ready a response. Royce takes a cigarette between long fingers and flicks open the lid of his lighter. “What would you do if he disagrees, disapproves of this? Takes a look at everything you say and tells you no?”

Grant clenches his fists, not angry but considering. “That’s his right. And regardless of whether or not I expect him to agree, it’s *wrong* to not mention something like this. Irresponsible. I have to tell him what’s going on, at the very least.”

Royce strikes the flame on the lighter before remembering where he is. “Do you mind if I, ah, light this?” “It’s fine.” Smoke curls from the end of the cigarette, and he takes a long drag. “Why are you asking me, if you’re so—so firmly set?” Grant meets his eyes; soft brown meeting hard green. “You’re as much involved in this idea as I am, you know. I *do* happen to care about your opinion.” Exhale of smoke, the acrid taste of it lingering in his mouth and throat. “We could use the, the, ah.” It takes a second to find the words for what he means. “The journalistic advantage.” Grant nods. “That too.” A brief pause; he clasps his hands in front of him. “I don’t think he’ll say no. It wouldn’t have gotten this far along if we didn’t share the same ideology. He’s very bright, you know. Curiosity gets the better of him sometimes. He’ll at least be willing to hear me out, on those grounds if nothing else.”

It’s a lot to risk on nothing but trust. But then, he doubts any of this could get very far without a few risks. “I’m not objecting.” “So that’s a yes?” “That’s typically what, what *inobjection* means.” Is that a word? Too late now. Grant smiles, leaning back in his seat. Seems satisfied. “I’d prefer to get it over with sooner rather than later. For his sake and mine.”

This really isn’t his area of expertise—romance never has been, and he isn’t sure why Grant expects him to advise him on it now. The cigarette just about winds down, and he taps out the embers into an ashtray. “Good luck, or, whatever. We’re going to need it.” Remnants of smoke flare out when he exhales. “Do you want to stay for dinner tonight? It’s that timearounds I think, it might be easier for you.”

Grant furrows his brow, looking down at his watch then back up at Royce. “It’s three in the afternoon. Hardly supper time.” Oh. His sense of time has been rather off lately. Comes with being so involved in this work, it seems. He hasn’t been exactly focused on timing of late, and his studio is rather lacking in windows. Only three or so hours off. “My mistake.”

“Although,” Grant continues, the corner of his lip turning up. “I wouldn’t be opposed to staying for it, if you don’t mind.”

## End Notes

i actually wrote this in november as part of a longer (much longer!) thing but that project wound up being, scrapped, to say the least. but i plucked this one (seemingly) redeemable bit out of it. the process royce summoned was a creep, in case it wasn't clear (i really hope it was clear). i avoided using the name. royce is a doozy to write, at least dialogue-wise; i speak in a similar way to him irl, but i have a heck of a time actually getting him down on the metaphorical paper.

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