

Forecast of Stained Glass

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Forecast of Stained Glass

by [RainyRune](#)

Summary

“The purpose of this work is to capture the events that led to the narrative in the game, to shine new light and bring context to the characters that are most prominent, and to entertain anyone whether they’ve played Transistor, or are just curious. Please enjoy.” – Rainy

(Recommended listening and relevant songs would be 'Old Friends' - 'The Spine' - and 'In Circles' from the 'Transistor Original Soundtrack')

Notes

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

OVC NETWORK BREAKING HEADLINE:

- > Beloved Artist makes her grand re-entrance onto the Empty Set <
- > Come see the songstress 'Red' perform her latest work titled "Recollections" Tonight!
- > The Highrise Performing Arts Orchestra will be accompanying her for the performance this evening.
- > Get your seats while you have the chance – It's going to be a night you won't want to miss!

Current Seats Left (0)

[We're sorry for the processing delay, please try again at a later time]

re: |

Show's sold out. That's just like her.

Auden looked up from the faintly lit terminal screen and turned toward the inner entrance of the venue. People from all walks of life, lineage, and popularity lined themselves in front of the security booths before being granted access into the main gathering space between the entrance and the theatre. On his way inside a few hours earlier, he saw the line curve twice around the massive block known as the Empty Set in the downtown centre of Cloudbank. It wasn't uncommon for things to be busy for a weekend performance such as this, but nobody could bring in a crowd like Red.

Her voice '[...]puts people in a trance where passion of all fashion and volume spills from any spectator's hearts' (Goldwater Weekly) - with the biggest fans being the cause for her hiatus, and the reason she stepped down from the stage. Red's return has been highly anticipated as an event for a few months now, though the official date wasn't made public until only a few days ago. The atmosphere of excitement and positive comments from the guests this evening is only broken by their exasperations of relief at being able to see the performance live tonight.

A few faces Auden vaguely recognized passed by him on their way inside, and they reintroduced themselves to him as some old friends of hers. It only took a few of these encounters for outside air to sound more refreshing than the refreshments going around the plaza, so he pushed passed the line, exchanged nods with the staff, and went outside. The air was cool, erring on the cold side, and the night sky was nearly invisible from the theater's lights alone, though with all the lights this city has to offer...

You'd have a better chance catching the stars with your fingers than catching a glimpse from down here.

He stepped into the street and observed the blockade of guest parking. It was almost comedic how ill-prepared the venue was for the amount of people gathered. The locals wouldn't have a problem taking the streets home, but no way would the usual amount of space be able to house the individual transports people have taken to get here.

*More folks from out of town than I'd have guessed. Main's traffic'll be a mess.
Lucky that's not my concern for tonight.*

Auden's hands twitched simultaneously as he raised an arm and examined the gauze tape running from just above his wrist to the knuckles. Holding his wrist and flexing his fingers, he couldn't help but laugh to himself.

*Even with all the official staff and security, she insisted I be ready to stop anyone particularly... Noisy – from crashing her big night.
When I became a pro in the league, I never thought I'd end up as some kind of bodyguard for...
But here I am.*

Still a little ways off until show time. His surveillance wasn't meant to lead him too far from the premises, but he decided to take a short walk to refresh his head. Things were moving relatively quickly for the two of them. He struggled to remember exactly when she first reached out to him again - as they had known each other long before then - but as it stands now, he's more than a close friend to her. Officially, he was only another guest, but without him there, Red might not have gone out tonight at all. Never quite how he imagined going out with a celebrity would turn out.

Auden brushed aside the hair from his forehead and put a wrapped hand in his coat pocket. He pulled out his light and moved a smoke to his lips, but then he stopped. He stared at the lighter in his hands for a moment.

"What was that, hon'?"

"I said, you shouldn't be doing that so often."

"Sorry, you should have said so sooner. Like, twelve or more years sooner."

"It's just... It'll wreck your voice, you know."

"...Never knew anyone who cared like that."

"Your voice... is comforting."

"Can't hold a candle to yours."

He flicked his lighter up and back out of habit before throwing his cigarette into a nearby waste bin. Turning to leave, he hesitated once again, and instead grabbed the half-full pack of cigs from his coat pocket and tossed it after his initial cigarette.

"You got me there, huh?" Auden whispered to himself before shaking his head with a soft smile.

On his way back to the venue, all was quiet apart from the last of the guests outside and a few sirens in the distance. It was then that he remembered.

*I forgot the flatbread. Was that a promise? Ah, never mind.
Junction J.s' just up there.
Better grab a Sea Monster Flat for the Miss.
Even if it's cold by the time she's done, she says it's better that way.*

* * *

OVC NETWORK SERVICE UPDATE

> Live Update for OVC standard terminals will begin shortly <
> Current Progress: 87%

*"The spine is coasting toward a vanishing point with no trace.
A wall of water is all that is left when we are cut apart.
In circles the gold leaves fall creating a heightmap of dormant apexes.
Gateless lies the sandbox of dreams.
We all become interlaced in the tangents of the universe and her signals.
Impossible stars and paper boats."*

User Commands:

Help() . Flood() . Tap() . Void()

re: |

Sybil sighed as she swayed on her heels and looked down from the balcony suite at the east-end wing of the Empty Set's theatre. Her expression of boredom had an aura underneath of condescension, betraying her lavish and gala-worthy appearance. The auditorium was immense – No surprise as this was the biggest and oldest venue in the entirety of Cloudbank. From the topmost balcony and suite seating, one could barely make out individuals in the orchestral space before the stage, while the general audience spanned like a sea flowing out from far below. There were multiple mezzanines and entresol layers of seating as well, three to four different layers on top of one another depending on what you consider fair viewing. The most unique thing about the Empty Set, however, is how breathable the theatre itself is. The high ceiling is only partial, with indoor foliage spread throughout and up high, almost as if whenever the building were to wear or crumble, a lush plant would sprout. The colour from within was in of itself a spectacle because of this – The greens, accents of golds pairing with royal reds, and the outdoors's city lights bleeding within.

“None of this would exist if I didn’t stick my neck out,” Sybil scoffed.

She turned to face the inside of the suite and put a hand on her wide-brimmed ivory belle as she tossed her cream-coloured curls behind her shoulders. A man was sitting on a vintage velvet-craft sofa under the shadow of the balcony curtains. Only a flickering glow and a drag of smoke could be seen within his silhouette. Sybil clasped her hands behind her and looked through the ceiling.

“Why did I ever think things would change? I’ll never be free from her, will I? Even after tonight is over...”

Sybil looked like she was about to shed tears, but when she looked down her face grew dark and scornful once more.

“Always in *her* shadow. Always listening to *her* voice...”

Suddenly, she looked down and began clawing at her own face.

Her laughs were inaudible.

She stopped after a few moments as suddenly as she began, and silvery flakes floated from her brow and cheeks. Her face had patches of circuitry and tangled wires breaking the surface of her fair skin. The only human thing about her appearance as she stood was the glistening streaks running from under her eyes.

“Are we really doing this, Royce?” Sybil pleaded.

The man stirred and shifted forward as he sat with his hands folded in front of him. His figure was tall and dashing. His reply was slow and emotionless.

“The process has begun... Already begun. Whether we wish to do this or not is no longer in our hands, Sybil.”

A cold air hung between them. Sybil’s state turned from mournful to ill-tempered.

“This night was supposed to be *ours*, Royce. Why were the Kendrells involved?”

Royce stood up and began to pace the balcony.

“Every arrangement has to have a backing to get off the ground. No progress would be achieved if two people just... stood around a blank canvas.”

Sybil approached Royce slowly and whispered.

“...But you... You have the brush.”

Royce ran his hand through his dark hair and took the cigarette from his mouth.

“I only claim a *piece* of that brush, my dear.”

As Sybil and Royce stood by the balcony, Asher and Grant Kendrell entered from the inner suite. Their arms were linked casually, as they stepped onto the balcony to greet their

favoured partners of the process.

“Ahh, so here we have it!” Grant shouted excitedly. He swung a massive hand into Royce’s shoulder to greet him. Sybil turned her face away and held out her hand which Grant received and kissed.

“A night for the books indeed,” Asher remarked.

“Why so grim, Roy?” Grant pressed.

“We were just discussing our part we are meant to play this evening,” Royce answered.

“Whatever do you mean, my boy?” Grant’s tone began to grow more severe.

“You have no *part* in this evening’s performance. We all act as one. We all become one.”

“This is as The Camerata should be,” Asher softly spoke.

Sybil flinched at this. Grant turned to her and caught her gaze for a split second. Then he understood. He looked to Royce.

“Don’t think you’ve fooled me, Royce. I know you’ve already run the first build and found yourself a... test vessel.”

Grant’s face contorted into a cruel smirk before he stroked his beard. Royce stared him down and replied.

“We wouldn’t be able to do any of this without Sybil’s foresight and public leverage. But who’s fooling who, exactly?”

Asher stepped in front of Royce.

“The Camerata will be-“

“Not so loud. There are people all around us,” Royce interrupted.

Sybil laughed. A sickeningly sweet and piercing laugh. She gestured across the balcony toward the guests below.

“What does it matter? We live in a world where the colour of the sky is a matter of choice by these people. They’ll all be sent to the country before the end.”

The orchestra’s preparation was beginning, and the sound of strings filled the concert hall. Red needed no announcement or introduction to enter the stage. The crowd hushed and the lights dimmed further. Royce looked over the balcony to see Red take the microphone in the centre phase.

“Every star is fated from birth to burn out. Who’s to say - Why shouldn’t we be ready to capture that nova in a bottle when the time comes?”

* * *

The detour for the choice flatbread took longer than Auden intended. He wanted to be back in time to head backstage and deliver it straight to her stage room, but by the time he returned to the plaza, he could tell that the house lights were low, and the orchestra's arrangement had already begun. At the security checkpoint, Auden spoke with a few staff members he had exchanged with previously, and handed over the steaming carry-out.

Damn it. Didn't even get the chance to say 'break a leg out there.' No one to blame but me though.

He rested his hands in his coat pockets and made his way to the auditorium. Auden heard her sing before he saw her. Her voice melted away any stray thoughts inside him.

*“~You always go
Walking on coals
Walk away slow
Feel the fire
Light your way to me
My siren song for you*

*I see the spine___ of the world
Sparkle and shine___, light the inside
I see the spine___ of the world
I know it's mine___
Twisted and tied
I see the spine~”*

The theatre was completely filled from the wings to the walls, and the applause at the conclusion of the opening single was deafening. Auden stood in the frame of the hall doors and watched with a dreamy expression across his face.

Can't help but feel like the luckiest guy in the world right about now.

With no empty seat to be seen across the Empty Set, Auden walked along the backrow in the shadow of the upper layers. The show continued as the orchestral arrangements fused with her voice in a way no one in the audience had heard before. The strings and horns had a richness that only this unique auditorium could annunciate. Normally, the orchestra's fortissimo tones would reverberate off the ceiling and then onto the crowd below, but because the ceiling was open to the air in part, the sound favoured the sides for their echo, making

both the vocals and instruments more intimate to the ears of the spectators. Red never moved from her spot in the centermost point of frontstage, yet her energy would have made it sound as though she were dancing the night away.

~

Almost like tonight couldn't be any more perfec-

Something caught Auden's attention up on the mezzanine.
A person he'd seen before. Someone who shouldn't be here.
They were moving toward the exit that splits into the ground floor and the alley leading towards backstage and the off-left wing.

What the hell is Royce doing up there?

Auden glanced to his sides and searched for any immediate staff he could speak to before looking up again to see that the figure had drifted out of sight.

Shit, no time.

The stairs where Auden needed to be were opposite and across from his current position in the auditorium. He slid through the standing crowds behind the general admission seats, but he wasn't able to keep his eyes on the stalker. The noise from the theatre faded out as his focus grew. Climbing the stairs to the second layer, he quickened his pace down the hall and found the staff-only backstage door. The entrance had a gold chain and velvet rope barring entry. With the crowd more sparse up here, Auden wasted no time lifting the fancy barricade, ducking underneath, and heading inside. The final song for the evening had just begun.

~

*"~Flying in circles, just trying to land
I see you hurting, I do what I can
But I ___ won't ___ save you ___
I ___ won't ___ save you ___~"*

The suspended alleyway backstage was a mess of panels and catwalks – dark up above, and blindingly bright below. Stage left was a good ways below but the thick cables and grand curtains made visibility in any direction low. Auden crept across the largest walkway and tried not to look up or down. There was a metal scraping sound as one of the walk panels shifted out from underneath him. His arm slammed into the rail beside him and he lost balance. Hanging from the now vertical latticed panel, he muffled a curse into his shoulder. It took a few moments of silence for Auden to regain his cool. He sighed and grunted as he carefully climbed back onto the walkway.

This is crazy. Only he would pull something like this.

There was a break in the alleyway that lead straight over to stage right. At the end of that path, a tight spiral of maintenance stairs followed down to the stage-floor behind the off-right wing. He saw the shadow of someone creeping down the stairs. Auden followed the path to stage right as silently as possible.

Got you now.

~

*“~Maybe you’re looking for someone to blame
Fighting for air while you circle the drain
Never be sorry for your little time
It’s not when you get there, it’s always the climb
But I ___ won’t ___ save you ___
I ___ won’t ___ save you ___~”*

“~I ___ won’t ___ save you ___~”

“~I ___ won’t ___ save you ___~”

“~I ___ won’t ___ save you ___~”

Auden peered over the stair railing. There was no one behind the right wing curtain. No staff or stage members...

How-?

The Orchestra’s flow flourished into a beautiful finale. Red outstretched her arm in a last wave to her fans and breathed a deep breath as the curtain began to fall. Auden was close enough to see her. He almost called out to her as he went down the stairs himself, but someone he didn’t see before was walking out onto the stage from the left side headed for Red.

Oh, Sybil’s over there. Wondered when the producer was gonna show face.

Sybil strode straight over to Red as the curtain slowly fell. She smiled. Her face was freshly powdered, and she looked just as stunning as Red herself. Red turned to Sybil. They shared an embrace like old friends. The curtain hit the stage and the audience gave a heartfelt applause. Sybil put her hand behind Red’s head and whispered to her.

“See you in the country.”

Behind the curtain erupted hell on earth. Cheers turned to wails and shrieks, applause turned to sounds that only spelt death. It was like the entire Theatre was being executed at once. Auden was petrified and unable to find sense in anything he heard or saw. Red put her hands over her mouth and screamed as she backed away from Sybil before tripping on her dress. Then emerged three more figures from backstage. The four of them stood over Red. One of them drew something that looked like a giant sword, lit from the hilt to the tip with an other-worldly glow, and a red eye embedded in the blade. Red's face snapped Auden back into reality. He vaulted over the railing and crashed onto the stage. Royce raised the sword as if he were readying to impale Red through her breast.

"This is goodbye, Red."

With a speed only the adrenalin of a born fighter was capable of, Auden sprinted across the stage.

He could have easily gone for a running punch to any of the four standing there, but his eyes didn't move from Red.

He took her hand, and breathed his last.

Then, the world flipped upside down.

* * *

"Red where are you?"

His voice had an unnatural echo attached to it.

All was dark. Auden could only hear rain spilling from the sky.

"Don't be gone, please don't be gone..."

Auden called out.

"I'm here, I'm over here, I'm still here! If she's hurt... If she's hurt I'll--"

Auden couldn't move. His vision had partially returned. It was then that he realized he was viewing himself from the third perspective. His body had been impaled, and was leaning against a glass store-front, now streaked in red. He was collapsed on the ground, with the sword sticking straight from his abdomen. The sight of his corpse before him made Auden want to vomit blood, but he felt no pain.

Auden began to panic. His sharp breaths were in complete rhythm with the sword's pulsing glow.

"What the fuck happened to me?"

He saw a familiar figure approach him.

"Hey... That you?"

Auden spoke to her. His voice faltered and still held that strange echo.

“Oh... look at you. You’re alive.”

Red said nothing. Soaked from the rain, she looked cold and out of breath, panting with a terrified look painted on her face.

“Could use your help – I know this looks bad.”

Red began to cry. She knelt down beside him. She touched him, but he felt nothing.

“Hey... Say something already.”

Nothing.

“Say something, will you?”

She shook her head. She mouthed words, but no sound came from her throat.

“Oh no.”

FIN .

End Notes

-The game Transistor was originally planned to be named Auden. This name comes from the character titled “Boxer” in the games files – Originally planned to be the main protagonist, before his role and Red’s were switched in development. Auden is “Mr. Nobody” or “Unknown” as we know him from his record in-game, though for the sake of this prequel fiction, it made much more sense for his human form to be called by his original name. The Name ‘Auden’ has European origin and closely translates to ‘Old Friend,’ which carries narrative significance, while also referencing the first track on Transistor’s OST.

-The title of this work has a triple meaning behind it. ‘Forecast of Stained Glass’ is meant to imply both a romantic future, and the death of Auden, while ‘Forecast’ and ‘Stained Glass’ are two tracks from the OST.

-The Sea Monster flatbread from Junction Jan’s is Red’s favourite, and its origin is a personal favourite moment from the game.

-The poem within the second OVC terminal contains the titles of nearly all Red’s singles.

-Sybil’s erratic behavior and inhuman demeanor is meant to symbolize her almost full turn to the process, as when you meet her in-game, she is the only member of the Camerata to become processed.

-In the scene where Red’s voice is taken in-game, Grant is implied to be the one to kill Auden, but Royce’s character is more rich and flushed out as a villain so as a result it felt more fitting for him to deal the final blow.

-The word "country" has many theorized contexts, but for this work it most closely relates to death.

-The final scene of this fiction lines up exactly with where Transistor begins.

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