

Transcript of Jan 11th QnA with BicycleWalrus and Caspian (Jeromy Walsh) from Soulbound Studios. For the game Chronicles of Elyria.

Video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i_0aZ2_3FF4

note: this doesn't include some of the intro/outro and other random discussion. This is focusing more on the specific Questions and Answers and follow-ups to those.

BW: Kitsune121x asks "When are we going to see a video of the game instead of screenshots and pictures?"

Caspian: Good question, we are working on it right now, I think I mentioned it to you guys before. When we first started working on the project, we had a lot of concept art, had a lot of models, we're working in unreal so we had a great engine but we didn't have an animator for a long time so everything was being done with static models. So we have an animator now and we were talking to one the other day and we'll probably be talking to one later this week and the animator is working around the clock right now, to try and get movement, combat and all those other mechanics in place, looking the way we want to, looking smooth, looking believable etc.

With that said, there are people in the community that have seen videos already of people moving around the world, it's just not quite ready for broad exposure yet.

Right now the thing we're focusing on the most is our combat video and that's something we're working diligently on. Our goal is that the combat video will be polished and ready to show sometime around mid-feb.

BW: Ok, mid February is when the combat video will be ready.

Caspian: That is what we're currently looking at, that's our trajectory right now.

BW: T... asks "Will there be a cash shop, where someone can use real-world money to buy in-game items, benefits, etc. other than lives."

Caspian: Not really no, we wanted to write a design journal today that talked about what you can purchase other than just lives, but we didn't get to it as there's some internal discussion happening right now on the system benefits as we've got it designed today internally. The short answer is no, what we don't want is for people to be able to purchase cash items ingame like weapons or even aesthetics stylised stuff like costumes and stuff like that.

We really want a one currency system where everything that can be purchased in-game can be purchased with in-game gold.

BW: Grimwulf asks “Will the PAX East demo, be available to those not able to attend.”

Caspian: That’s our plan, we might release it to the PAX people first we might release to the community at the same time as PAX and we might even to the community a little bit before PAX, just to give people some hands on experience. We’re not sure yet, ultimately everybody will get a chance to play it.

BW: I guess my question will be, are you going to have members from the community beta test the PAX East demo.

Caspian: Absolutely. We want people to get there hands on it and give us feedback on it before it gets in the hands of PAX East people. So people that have high influence in the community based on the new influence system that we’re rolling out, that have been here for a long-time, that are active on the forums, who have been providing valuable feedback to us the entire process, they’ll be the ones that get their hands on it first. But those who are registered on the site, we might release it to a few more as time goes on so until we get the volume of feedback and a good sample size that we’re looking for, before even PAX East begins.

At that point we’re not talking about a broad release, we’re talking about kind of a closed beta type thing, but we will pull that directly from people in the community.

BW: Grimwulf asks “Normally pinetrees in the real world are harvested every 40-50 years, now this would equate to around 5-7 months in-game time, if my maths is correct, in that regard do renewable resources have accelerated growth cycles.”

Caspian: They do have accelerated growth cycles, that algorithm we’re going off right now is taking things in the real world in terms of years like that, so that’s true of our criminal system that we’re looking at right now, and kind of relating it to days inside of Chronicles of Elyria. So the example he gave is it takes 50 years for one of these trees to grow, so then what we look at is, “what if it took 50-days in Elyria instead”, and we’re talking about Elyrian Days here. So Elyrian days are 2.5 hours, so we would take 2.5 hours and multiple it by 50 and that’s about how long that it would take.

BW: Rosuto Genjitsu asks “Can poison or venom cause a Coup De Gra?”, so say for example, I’m an assassin, I want to kill a king, I drop a vial of poison into his glass he drinks... and will he actually die a full death spirit walk type death or not.

Caspian: Both are possible, there are poisons and toxins that will kill, there are poisons and toxins that will not.

BW: Blackfox asks “Not sure if this was already mentioned, but I hear that the story was to cover 10-years, I assume that’s real-life years, my question is Will there be anything after that?”

Caspian: I love that I haven't read all of these questions ahead of time, there's no preparing for these answers. So there will be something after that, we have a 10-year story in mind, we're obviously talking to several story directors, I'm talking to one in particular right now who I'm so very excited about working with. I haven't got confirmation yet from the person.

There is this idea of having a 10-year dynamic story with a beginning and end, beyond that we might find halfway through the project that we like the current world and we want to do more with that story and kind of continue to expand it and kind of have a Chronicles of Elyria 2, which is starting off at the same place as this one ends and just continues after that. That's a very likely possibility of it happening, and what's going to happen is somewhere in the process of this is we'll be working on resources to work on another game in another world parallel universe, different genre, maybe sci-fic or something like that. So a lot of our focus will be on that, and what will happen at that point is after the 10-year story ends the world will continue on and the personal stories that exist, that the soulbourn engine creates would still be there, but there wouldn't be a kind of long-term overarching story that's been driven at that point. Obviously we don't want to just leave it in that state, the best thing I can tell you is we'll probably plan to develop a sequel but like any project, we have to have a beginning and an end at least from the outset. So from the start we have to have a beginning and an end, and that's what the scope of the story is and in all likelihood there will be a sequel.

BW: I think that's a very compelling point about Chronicles of Elyria, which is a game about permanent ends, you have a permanent death and now we're talking about an MMORPG that actually ends. So we're talking sequels and parallel universes in the future, kind of short answer there correct?

Caspian: Yes, you are correct, that is a good summary and I do like you called out the end there, if we did do a sequel to this 10-year story there would be a notable end to this story and a notable start to the next one.

BW: Blackfox also asks "Will all Lore be in-game, or is there a possibility of a graphic novel to learn about the world before the game."

Caspian: That is a great question, I really like that one. Eddie Smith is our art director, he goes by Heat. Eddie is a great fan of graphic novels and has worked on a number of graphic novels in his free time as well as commercially and we have talked about doing a Graphic Novel or more that talks about the different lore, different religions, historical events that have taken place in the past and I think whatever story director we get, is also going to be passionate about that, as they get to write about things that aren't happening today, but also about other stories, kind of like miniature novels and short stories and stuff like that.

I would say chances like that are very good, you'll see Lore showing up outside of the game.

BW: Sabbicat has two questions “Will you be hosting and Chronicles of Elyria events at PAX East for any of the community who may be able to attend.”

Caspian: We do plan to be at PAX East, we do plan on doing something big at PAX East. We’ve got some conversation going on internally about ultimately what we wanna do. Ultimately I can say is it requires we ask the people at PAX whether or not there is a limitation on the amount of size of the structure we can have within our space, and how high it can be. If that gives you any ideas.

We want to do something fun, we want to do something sort of exclusive and if we get it the way we want to it will be something the people will line-up to see.

BW: Fantastic, that sounds really fun. But I think this question is more or less outside of PAX, like say for example, like an after PAX party, or people who didn’t get tickets but want to hang-out with the developers. Is there anything going on outside of PAX walls?

Caspian: We haven’t actually planned that yet, but it is a suggestion and absolutely we’ll probably do something with the company and if people come out all the way to PAX East to see us, then we’ll make sure we’re available to be seen.

BW: Next question, also to do with PAX from Sabbicat “Other than being able to play the demo at PAX East, do you plan on having any special announcements, any kind of feature announcements or things like that at PAX East?”

Caspian: We don’t plan on having any announcements specifically at PAX East right now. That is to say we don’t have anything we want to announce at PAX East, that’s not to say we won’t come up with something between now and then. I think any big announcements people are waiting to hear about between then and now such as plan Alpha, when we plan Beta, when the crowd-funding campaign is going to be, we’ll have answers to many of those before PAX East, we’re at least planning to answer the kickstarter question by the end of the month, so that’ll be there really early. It’ll be too early to answer alpha and beta at that point, because it’ll be around the time of the Kickstarter to begin with.

We won’t have had a chance to really ramp up with our staff and that sort of thing.

BW: Cheezer asks “How much money have you estimated that game will cost to make minimum.”

Caspian: I’m going to withhold the answer to that, we have a value yet when we start nailing down specifics and start getting closer to our kickstart goals and objectives and part of that still requires I know how much work we can get done of the next couple of months and part of it... yeah it’s a tough question how much it’s going to cost us to complete. It’s not a number I want to give out yet.

BW: Sabbicat also asks “Have you been in contact with any investors or will this be entirely crowd-funded”

Caspian: No we have not talked to any investors yet, but if for some reason our crowd-funding looks as if it's not going to make it and we start weaker than we like then we'll start proactively talking to investors. But at this point we really want to maintain as much creative freedom as we can. We also really like the connection we've made with the community, so I sorta feel like we're developing it with the community, they're active on providing feedback and letting us know what they do like and don't like and we're ultimately choosing to ignore them and do it our way anyways, or to listen to them and really kind of take in their feedback, internalise it and do what we can with it. I really feel like we're doing this with the community, for the community and I kind of want to leave it up to the community if it's something they want to do or not.

BW: Howl asks “What are your estimate prices for the starting soul-pack with the spark of life, since the estimate for single spark is estimated around \$29.99 I wonder how much the initial cost of buying the game would be.”

Caspian: We're still playing with numbers, obviously everything is an estimate right now so we're looking somewhere between \$25 and \$35 for our Sparks of Life, we kinda settled on around \$29-\$30 right now, and we're looking at the basic game being around around \$49-\$50. SO it's on the cheaper side and we still have a lot of work to do with Amazon on figuring out what our server costs are going to be, how many servers we're going to need to spawn, what our bandwidth is going to be and some of those things we won't know the answer to until we start play-testing and get early access. Once that happens we'll have a better idea on how we're tracking and those sort of things, so it's still in the air.

So our numbers around \$50 for the basic game and \$30 for a spark of life.

BW: To be clear the \$50 for the basic game comes with 2 sparks is that correct?

Caspian: The base game comes with 1 spark of life and 3 souls, so you get a variety of souls to choose from and then you get 1-life which as you know should average about a year of play.

BW: Did you notice that was my roundabout way of figuring out my question from a long-time ago?

Caspian: Yeah, I know what you're asking is it 1 soul or 2 I know what you were asking.

BW: Howl also asks “Will your fame be visible to you, or will you have to figure out what your fame level is yourself. How would we know apart from the obvious.”

Caspian: There is no visual cue, other than how you interact with players and NPCs. We do that

for a couple of reasons, number 1 it breaks immersion to see a progress bar overhead or in your inventory or character bar that tells you information like that. it should be obvious from your interaction in the world. The other thing we want people to do is, we want them to be focused on their experience.

If they have a big impact in the world then they should kind of know they are more important to the story, and if they go off and do dangerous things then it's going to have a bigger impact. We really don't want to necessarily remind people that "hey you're really important now so if you do this it's going to be dangerous". We want them to feel it out, there's no visual indication, but honestly I'm not going to be thinking about it when I play. I'm going to be thinking about what I want to do, what I want to achieve, what my role in the story is going to be and I'm just going to assume from me that I'm always taking those risks and yeah it's going to have an impact on how long I'm going to live and my characters eventually going to die. But we really don't want players to always be thinking about the money, because honestly it's so little impact relative to the experience of playing the game, that it's just not going to be an issue I don't think.

BW: VictoriaRachel asks "Can you explain more how you see families developing? Do you expect players to take over their characters heirs or for them to use their heirs to expand their family with other players."

Caspian: The family system is one that we kind of gone back and forth on, when we would initially develop the family system, it was supposed to be mostly for the player to play with other people. So you would join in as a family, you would interact with others, they would mentor you and teach you about the game, you would recruit your friends and that sort of thing. So it was supposed to be a social tool, at some point though, we started playing other games that gave us the opportunity to play as our own heirs and that was fun and really gave us the ability to continue our line. That wasn't the original mechanic though, we were originally focused on the soul initially which was your soul, you've played a life with your soul, you would move on and live your next life in an entirely different family, different character, different experiences almost as if you're passing through time.

Like if Cleopatra were to be reborn, life after life, they're not necessarily show up in Egypt and not always be the heir of Cleopatra and stuff like that. That wasn't the original mechanic, but then we thought about it and were like "well there could be fun mechanics and stuff like that" so we kind of combined the two system, and as you know that's caused us no-end of headache as a result of that. Because those systems don't play well together, the classic example we go was one of those 'oh shit' moment. Like what if I wanted to play with my wife, well great you guys can join the same family and they said what would happen when we have kids, "well what happens when we have kids" well what about the other one, "well darn, one of you can be one of your heirs, the other one has to find another family or you can play your offspring, but if you kind of roleplay that you're married in-game sort of thing. Now you're marrying your kids together, so that definitely breaks down.

So we're going to have to make decisions on how the family system works relative to inheritance and passing stuff on to your next generation, we haven't come up with a perfect system yet as you know, this kind of ties into some of the stuff we're talking about in terms of reincarnation in general.

We're rounding off some of the edges in regards to the family system and we don't have the answers for the community right now, but it's something we're actively talking about.

BW: So really... this is still a work in progress.

Caspian: The family system really is a work in progress, it was originally designed just as a social thing, then it kind of became an advancement thing and we're leaning more and more making it back to a social thing, and finding a way that everybody kind of has their own families or they live a life in a family and move onto a different family and they will their stuff off to friends or other players and kind of that sort of thing. Again it's not perfect yet so I say we have some grinding to do on the edges still but we're going to have to make a decision on it pretty soon.

BW: Deffcon_1 asks "Are the Astral Plane, when we go to spirit walk, and the physical plane identical to each other. If not will we have insight to where we are when we are about to respawn after a spirit walk"

Caspian: They're not identical, and no you will not have any indication of where you are when you spirit walk, once you hit your body you're going to wake up and wherever you are, you are.

BW: Shadowfox asks a combat question "When it comes to the various types of fighting styles are you using motion capture to get those styles? And if so are using actual instructors from various fighting schools to get the real moves placed into the game?"

Caspian: So this is my opportunity to brag in 2 ways. Number 1, the time it takes to hand-key the animation sequence is too time-consuming, especially given the resources that we have. We've got the 1 animator and if we were to try and get him to hand-key an entire combat sequence by himself it would take him forever, so the first thing is we're using all mocap for now, everything we're doing in terms of combat based movement, walking, rolling, running, everything that we're doing. Basically any character animation right now, is being done through mocap, so there's that.

The answer to your second question is, for some stuff we're obviously doing a lot of research online, youtube videos, just like we normally do examining how locomotion works. Looking at different types of combat systems and that sort of thing. With that being said, I actually hold multiple black belts and high-level belts in different martial arts myself. Taekwondo, Capoeira, Akito, Jeet Kune Do. So actually kind of the creative director of the company, I do bring a lot to the company at least in terms as this is concerned. A lot of times it's just me in the studio with a

sword or with you know, me and another person, usually Tripnull working out a scenario, a combat sequence working out how it looks and then the animator is watching it as we're all kind of chatting about it. So there's been a lot of sword-fighting going on in the office, I'll be honest with you.

BW: So this might explain your recent enthusiasm to go to the Gym?

Caspian: Yes. The young ones have more energy than I do.

BW: lynkek asks "Will parents be able to pass on diseases off to their children."

Caspian: Anybody can pass diseases onto anybody, children or otherwise. Is it like terminal disease or autoimmune diseases that you could pass on to your children during pregnancy? No.

BW: lynkek next question "Will there be diseases that players can create"

Caspian: I mean, there's always research right?

BW: I suppose... Final Answer?

Caspian: At this point, there are no researchable diseases, at this point there isn't the ability for players to create diseases. Diseases are one of those things that are acts of gods, they show up and you have to find a way to deal with them and they move on. That being said, who knows what we'll do with it eventually.

BW: lynkek next question "Will there be creatures that we haven't seen before, for example original creatures, purposefully made for Chronicles of Elyria."

Caspian: Absolutely, Heat and I were talking about this a couple of days ago. He's got a very specific feel about how he wants the world to look and behave, and a lot of that includes animals that are not typical in our world, or different interpretations of animals in our world. So while you might expect to see rabbits and spiders and all that kind of stuff, they're not always going to be same as in our world. They might have different looks, they might have evolved slightly differently and the general community might have different attitudes about those types of animals. And we'll come up with some animals that are unlike any animals that are in our world, but just because things are different, doesn't necessarily mean they're mystical or rare or that sort of thing.

So we might have different types of mounts inside Elyria that are common-place that are mundane mounts in that kind of world, but in our world would be considered mystical or magical.

BW: Liva asks "Will gossip be a social fighting mechanic? So will gossip take down rulers, or influence the downfall or rise of others etc."

Caspian: Yes, that gets a little bit into the Dance of Dynasties stuff. We talked about this before where you have implicit contracts that are bound to items. There is the signet ring of the king, if somebody were to get that signet ring from the king, they could put it on and in theory they would be bound by the contract, but the way that these items work is their prerequisites to them, so any Joe Schmo cannot pick them up, I apologies if there is any actually Joe Schmo listening is like “hey that’s rude”, but if you were to put one of these rings on, it doesn’t automatically make you the king. The ring knows that you haven’t earned the respect and loyalty of the population yet so it doesn’t grant you the ability to be the king.

That makes it so that dukes or princes of the king are far more likely to benefit from one of these rings. So while they might hire somebody to bring them a ring, there’s really no real incentive for the assassin to keep the ring, they cannot do anything with it.

So that plays into the question they were asking, so yeah, this is one of the mechanisms that people can use to gain recognition to gain fame, smear the reputation of others in order to control that influence system. To make sure that if the eldest child of the king were to somehow come in contact with the ring, maybe it wouldn’t listen to them. Maybe they don’t have as much reputation or popularity as the second oldest child in the family, that sort of thing.

BW: BadgerAssassin asks “What importance does food have in Chronicles of Elyria. Does it give you a healing buff for a couple of seconds, or does it stop you getting a debuff like fatigue.”

Caspian: Both. The So the first is different types of food will help you train up different types of attributes, if you were doing a lot of mental activities for example, then you want to train your mind. Eating food that we established are rich in Omega 3 Fatty Acid type stuff, will make your mental stuff advance faster. Eating more protein type stuff will allow them to advance their physical more, social we still haven’t nailed that one yet, vegetarian? I don’t know.

BW: Cake

Caspian: Yeah... Let them eat cake! So different types of food will actually help with development with different types of attributes and may help with the development with different types of skills. With that said, eating too much foods of specific types will also cause you to gain or lose weight. That’s our dynamic body system that we’ve been working on. Our animator has been spending a lot of time on that, which makes it so that if you eat certain types of foods and inactive they might develop a bit of a pot belly, or just become heavy overall. The other thing is that you do need food to stay alive, so if you don’t eat the food then your fatigue will start to go down, actually the official name for it is vitality. There is a vitality bar and if you don’t eat then your vitality bar will start to decrease faster and you’ll get tired faster, you’ll have less vitality and that will continue until eventually you become unconscious and that’s bad, if you’re in the middle of nowhere.

BW: So you can starve to death, now starving. Does starving result in just incapacitation or could it result in a spirit walk.

Caspian: It can be a spirit walk, there can be a Coup De Gra due to starvation, we don't have the mechanics worked out but if your hunger gets all that way to 0 and your vitality get all the way to 0. If both of them drop to the very bottom and you're not in a town or an establishment, meaning you're out in the wilds someplace and both of those hit 0 it would actually be a Coup De Gra.

BW: Alright, so Don't Starve! It's a survival game, I think that's a good reminder to everybody listening.

Bongo asks "It looks like COE is going to be an intensive game, what kind of activities or characters can you see a more casual player having fun with?"

Caspian: Oh My God, everything! VictoriaRachel actually posted an echo not too long ago, where she talked about the roles that she was planning to play, or at least the ideas of some roles she had thought up. This is a survival game, so people are going to need the basic things to survive so they're going to need food and drink and things like that. Even just being something as seemingly mundane as a cook/chef a barkeep owner, owning a tavern or pub. if you enjoy the social elements of the game, they virtually guarantee there's going to be people you know or don't know you can socialise with. You can play dice games with them or card games.

You can gamble with them or some kind of bardic character inside of your tavern playing music for everyone and practicing and so like, if you enjoy something in a game, chances are good you're going to be able to find a place to do it in this game.

There are people who want to be lore masters and go out and gather information about things, explorers and tomb raiders, there's virtually no end to the role players can play in this game. I actually encourage people not to think about this game in terms of fighter or warrior or cleric bard. Think of it like, the Robin Hoods the Maid Mariannes. Pick a character you enjoy, even the vigilantes, think about the Punisher, you know very specific things get as close as you can to the ideal character you can perfect and make that the persona you want to pursue.

BW: Next question from Lech "How dynamic is the zoology and botany of the world. So for example you've mentioned that Rocs are man-eaters. How else will they affect the world in a biological sense."

Caspian: So that's kind of all about the food chain, we're talking about Rocs, for anybody who doesn't know, they're kind of like mystical birds, giant eagles, you can almost think about the giant eagles from Lord of The Rings. The idea is that those creatures, obviously there are no players out there, they have to eat giant things like sea creatures, kraken or giant things like whales that are out there. The idea is that there is an ecology, there is a food chain and that is

how the world is generated. So when we develop the server, we basically populate the world with tectonic plates then we populate it with where the water is going to be, rain shadows and all that. Then we fill the world with the lowest level of life form that we can, where are there going to be insects and bugs, then we kind of work our way up to rodents and larger mammals and stuff like that.

If a rodent is in an area and they get extinguished for some reason, then everything relied on them as a food supply is going to go looking for new food. SO there can be animals that branch out and start expanding their food to Mann, the Children of Mann, or they can migrate elsewhere and cause some other effects. So that's kind of part of our dynamic story engine is just waiting how to see the life forms evolve and what they end up hunting.

BW: Correct me if I'm wrong, in this game you could hunt a species into extinction correct? And in doing so that could have a dynamic effect on the circle of life... is that something you're going to be keeping an eye on? Imagine for example in the real world, we just kill all chickens. I don't know how it happens, now chickens are extinct. That's a big source of food for us, and let's say it gets to the point it becomes with unsustainable. How do you plan on dealing with that.

Caspian: There's obviously a lot of different food supplies, while things can become extinct, they generally become no longer available in an area. It is still possible for something to become extinct, but the players would have to try hard to hunt it down all over the world in order to eliminate it, like everything in this world it's possible but we also want to make sure it's extremely difficult to do that. The corollary to that is players can also breed them, they can take samples of them, go out noah's arc and grab 2 of each thing and set their own little farms and breed them and create new versions of them, and as long as those private farms exist and people are trying to preserve the specifics in a reserve like that, it virtually guarantees there can be incidents like that, that can be repopulated in certain places. But yeah, ultimately the question you have is are we planning to interfere if players tend to hunt things to extinction.

Not at first, we'll let them do it, maybe once, maybe twice. Until it looks like the server is getting to a point the server is unsustainable and there is no food and the whole population is gonna die, they're gonna all become coup de gra'd because there's no food in the world. But when it looks imminent it's going to happen then we'll have to interject in the world and do some cataclysmic event that will shift the world and make that no longer the focus.

BW: So all of a sudden everyone has new motivation to bring the world to breaking point, a cataclysmic event that sounds like a lot of excitement.

Caspian: You know what, they're going to have enough of those I think anyways that people aren't going to have to try for that.

BW: Wow... a number of cataclysmic events, thats interesting. I don't have a specific way to dive into that, nor do I think you're going to answer my question anyways. So I'm going to move on.

lentor asks "You spoke about the possible existence of gods and supernatural beings before in QnAs, I wondered if the game would have heaven and/or a hell."

I'm thinking as opposed to a belief system a very real physical place, or meta-physical, the player can travel too.

Caspian: So that gets into Lore and have to watch what I say here, as we are looking at our story director. We don't want to trap ourselves in too much, because any story director we get is going to want control over this as they can. But the way the lore had been privately written, the way I had written, subject to change depending on what the story director wants to do, there is multiple places or multiple planes of existences. It's actually called Haven, it's in the old Elyria where the world is broken up. There is kind of the New Elyria that people now know where Children of Mann are now populated and there is another place that people are constantly consumed by fire. And that world is know as Karceon? So that lore we've got now is there's multiple planes of existence and between those is the Astral Plane that's kind of separating all those planes.

BW: Vucar asks "If a player is framed for a crime, "arrested", and "imprisoned" all while they are offline (OPC), will they log in and see spirit loss from imprisonment, or will they be given time to clear their name (i.e. you get a week to prove innocence after logging in and finding out you're arrested)?"

Caspian: Good question, so the way we're looking at doing that is they would have a chance to clear their name. There wouldn't be any spirit loss, there would be any kind of official ruling until they actually sign on and are responsive. So you could in theory, just sign-off and never sign back on and your character would continue to age and when you did sign on and went through the whole trial process, then you're subject to whatever the punishment was.

That doesn't mean your character doesn't age, they continue to age while the player's offline the punishment wouldn't be applied until they log on later.

BW: So they would be given an opportunity

Caspian: Yeah for sure

BW: Gammea asks "I wondering if we will have a figure of Justice as judges and how players can play this role."

Caspian: It's something we're looking at, I don't want to go into too much detail. As I told people before, we want the game to be more or less player-run. So anything that an NPC can do, a player can do. So just like we have sheriffs that have the ability to go out and track people, hand out the bounty tokens for people who break the law. We're also looking at have a Justicar type system that's appointed by the Sheriffs or the Counts that'll actually be judges, that make a decision on rulings whether someone is guilty or not guilty of an offense.

We don't want to go the direction of ArcheAge and have a panel of people that vote, especially if they're only voting on punishment. We certainly aren't going to teleport people in from places to let them do this, because whatever story they were involved in before they were teleported is now compromised by that. So there's more likely to be due process type system, and people who's kind of role it is in the world to judge you.

BW: Gammea also asks "Today we know how influence points more or less works, but could you explain a little more how this will work after launch?"

Caspian: So yes I can, we're looking at two things we'd like to do with influence. The first we're doing today which is you can earn influence up until the game launch and what influence points represents your contribution to making the game better. It's how much you influence the success of the game between now and launch, as we talked about before there's a couple of things you can do. You can recruit other contributing members who become valuable members of the community or willing to buy the game, you can post it in forums you can start using your friend codes out, tweet or articles and facebook posts and other things.

We're expanding what you can do to earn influence, because we want them to be more, but we want it to be more concrete than just rewarding people who recruit as it is right now. There's many things you can do to earn that, but it's ultimately about are you influencing the success of the game. That would mean there's no-way to do that after the game launches, influence would effectively stopped being earned and at that point people who were here before the game launched can use that influence points then it would kinda go away and that would be the end of that.

The other solution we're going to incorporate into the Design Journal we're working on right now, the part 2 to the one we released last week. Influence is something you can continue to earn after launch but it can only be earned through INGAME means, so only things you do to add value and influence to the world, you know new content for others. How active you are inside the economy, many different things. The idea is then you can use that influence to make purchases out of game, using it to buy a new Spark of Life and that sort of things. I think in last week's Design Journal we referenced that as the Earn to Play model. You earn the ability to maybe get a new non-traditional character. All that through in-game play.

BW: Zeb asks "What kind of benefits will there be from being a part of a religion?"

Caspian: So this is a follow-up to a conversation in our IRC recently. We had talked briefly about the fact there are different religions, we released lore to tell us off that there is kind of one religion. I don't want to make that crystalised knowledge and I don't want to make that everywhere as the Story Director might change that. We really want this world to have conflict, we want this to be a conflicted world, it adds content to the game it makes it interesting.

One of the things people fight about is religion, but as we talked about, religion is interesting because we fight over what we believe, not over what we know, and if tell you here is what the religions mean, here is what the benefits are. People don't really have anything to fight over anymore there's just the truth. What we're doing with the religious system is we're developing multiple religions but we'll also kind of find ways so that your belief in your system makes it true for you. So then it's going to be about trying to convince other people to join your religion so they can get the benefits. Maybe it's not always consistent and it's unique for them in a certain way, we're still playing with it.

What we do know is we definitely want to motivate players to take on these different religions and have cause to try and convince others that their religion is the right one, I jokingly made a comment during the discussion panel, we always talk about the Akashic Records and that when they die their souls go back to the akashic records to learn and grow old and get born again. That's true of the specific religion, that is one religion, Anara Starsong's as we've talked about in the past. But not necessarily everyone believes you're reincarnated and/or go back to the Akashic records. What would happen if you were in the religion that didn't believe, would you still be reincarnated or would that be your last life.

If we told people that "yeah, there's this other religion, you don't reincarnate you live forever but if you die that's it" and that sort of thing, we're trying to play into player's emotion and fears and kind of capture the same thing that religion does but in a game. We're trying to do things that haven't been done before, and we'll probably get punished for it later but we'll see.

BW: There's a bit of a metagame there with the religion and if I can take this as an aside and say this, religion that's always been something in these MMORPG's that results than nothing more than a blurb on a profile or a stat increase. So bravo for taking a risk on this, that's one of the most compelling features of the game I've heard of so far.

Caspian: Yeah this is one of the more recent ones, we originally started with one religion in mind and we went back and forth on it for a while, but this feels like two different religions it doesn't feel like the same one and we were like "Wouldn't it be awesome if we had both of these and they couldn't agree which one was the correct one and which one wasn't" and it's in the last year really we've started looking at the idea of having multiple religions which is why we haven't nailed down all the mechanics of this are. It's still very much a work in progress, we're definitely going to have it decided and think on it more in the next couple of months. But it's one of those features that probably isn't going to get nailed down until closer to release.

BW: Zeb has another question “Will there be ritual sacrifice's of people.. or animals.”

Caspian: One religion might...we don't know yet, like we said religions have requirements, any good religion has a certain doctrine that you have to follow whether that's not committing certain crimes, or committing certain crimes on a regular basis to please your god. So whatever your belief might be it's probably in your best interests to do whatever that religion asks you to do.

BW: Let's go back into this ritual sacrifice. Can we take ritual sacrifice of people and put it on the table as a possibility or is that off your table in your mind.

Caspian: It's not off the table in my mind, there's a specific mechanic we have in mind for it but that's as much detail I want to go into it.

BW: I feel sorry for the people that have to be sacrificed... Ok moving on.

Caspian: One thing I want to clarify there is a sacrifice is that, it's a sacrifice it is not the same as capturing somebody and killing them. A sacrifice in this game is always going to be doing voluntary, so you have to sacrifice self, not others. Or other's that willingly allow themselves to be sacrificed.

BW: Dazzle asks “In regards to tamed animals, will they be just as susceptible to fatigue and starvation as players? I don't want to leave my dogs at home unattended just to come back and find they have starved to death.”

Caspian: They are just as susceptible as players, but we will definitely do something like ARK Survival does you have the ability to put out feeding troughs and stuff like that. So long as you get them stocked every once in awhile, or have a friend come over and throw food in you then you really won't have to worry.

In fact that's really out in the wild do you have to think about it. Pets that are back in town, probably won't be affected in the same way players are. So while they might gain fatigue or lose vitality and become more and more hungry, they're not going to become incapacitated.

BW: McClane asks “Curious how identities will work. If I get to know someone under a false identity and gain their trust (going for a long con) will they eventually see through to my "real" identity and be able to report the crime or will they only ever know me by the one I first give them?”

Caspian: They will only know you by the one you first give them, if you ever show them your other identity then obviously that's going to dramatically increase the opportunity for them to learn you have multiple identities. Also this concept through word of mouth, people talking about your other identity, if you gain two reputable identities, as they learn more about the other identity as well as the one they know, then there is increased likelihood they'll figure out those

2 people are the same. But in general you go to a far-away place, your other identity is really that well know, even if that other identity isn't the default or "first" identity you had. They'll never know the difference.

BW: Zylloth asks "Will there be an option for first-person combat"

Caspian: Yeah, this point there probably will, we've gone back and forth as the combat system was being designed. At this point our combat system is all fully defined and at this point we cannot see a reason why player's wouldn't be able to do it all first-person.

BW: Ok, let's be honest right now. Would there be a disadvantage for being in first person, is it harder to control?

Caspian: It's hard to answer to answer that, I don't like first-person as I always feel I have limitation in terms of field of view and I like to see the animations my character is doing in terms of timing and make it easier to work with. Do I think there's a disadvantage. I think it's going to be very player-dependant, for someone who is used to playing first-person games, especially first-person fighting games might find it just fine. It might work perfectly well for them, I can say it is timing based, combo based so it might be challenging for someone to learn timing of those maneuvers in first person but maybe not. We're certainly going to work to make that not the case, I think it's mostly just going to be on player-preference and whichever one players feel their most comfortable in.

BW: Since we've gone into first-person and we know that's somewhat of a priority, can I ask the obvious follow-up question. Is there going to be any support for VR headsets like occulus rift.

Caspian: Yeah, so we haven't spent anytime on it now, but the Oculus Rift has first party support more or less now and there's a plugin available for Unreal Engine that allow you to do support for VR like that and we are using Unreal. At this point we don't know if it's just free out of the box or if there's a little bit of work that needs to be done to make that possible, but our plan is, assuming it doesn't take much work, is kind of have that support from the beginning. So definitely I think the skill challenges, first-person combat, archery or just kind of the interactions and socialising with others in first person could add an immersive element in the game. if people want to spend the money for it, then it may be worth it... we'll see.

BW: How far away from it are you from developing the Nerve Gear.

Caspian: Someone asked me this a while ago and I jokingly said we're closer to it than you think. But the reality is we're nowhere near to it. But for the sake of the argument if this game was to do stupidly well, and as the owner of the company I was to make stupid amounts of money. Not that I will but it'd be nice, but if it did I think the brain human interaction that's currently happening right now, is probably the most innovating area of science for me I find that most fascinating So if anyone were to ask me if I could fund research in any one area, I think

that's probably where I would fund it. Because we can do tacton now sorta, certainly we can see the games we're playing we can hear it, we have 3D positional sound but in order to leverage like taste and smell and kind of really get into the game in a way more than what we have now, we need to tap into the brain.

We need to find a way to convince our optic nerves, our olfactory nerves and all that, that it's actually seeing and smelling these things. Do we think it's going to happen in my lifetime? Probably not, man I would love to research it.

BW: Derp Circus asks "You mentioned geographical areas will be named by how many times the name appears in game. Can characters gain fame through in game lore or stories written in game?"

Caspian: So that's much like the rumours, and it doesn't really matter whether or not the rumours are written or spoken, so yes you'll more than likely be able to develop fame through those means.

BW: Derp Circus asks "Is there a release date for the new website that has updated new influence system."

Caspian: Not a release date, we use an Agile methodology here, we have a Kanban board where we have all of our tasks set up and they kind of float across the board and it's currently the items on the board, so myself and TripNull are working on those and when all the cards are off the board. The cards are not off the board yet. It's going to be next week sometime before the cards get off.

BW: How many cards remaining.

Caspian: Too many to remain on the board right now, TripNull says more than 5.

BW: Ubar asks "Given the depth and complexity of CoE, will casual players have a chance to compete against hardcore players with lots of free time?"

Caspian: So that was the topic of the Design Journal that we wanted to release today. That is kind of the topic that TripNull and I were discussing earlier, I threw out one of those kind of random design topic question sit's kind of like one of those "what if we were to totally rethink the way the world works" sort of things. And we kind of got into a in-depth discussion, which kind of took the design journal we were thinking about off the table until we answer whether or not the radically different idea I'm thinking about is something worth pursuing as an idea or not.

But what I can tell you is whatever the solution we come up with, the goal for chronicles of elyria is that players that have a lot of time playing in the game, don't have an inherit huge advantage over people who don't have a lot of time to play the game. Primarily we don't want the game to

be about grind and time in-game, we really want it to be about the experiences and the storytelling you can do. So whatever system we choose and however we solve this problem, we want it so that players can come into the game, play with their friends and enjoy the game and not feel their obligated to spend ridiculous time in it.

BW: Jouten asks “How will multiple PC's talk to a single NPC? Will it be instanced or can groups contribute to a narrative?”

Caspian: That's a really interesting question. I don't have a good answer for that right now, it was not really instanced. It was more of a, you go to talk to someone and their in the middle of a convo, they kind of acknowledge you're wanting to talk to them and they'll go back to what they're doing until they're free to talk to you or kind of bored of who they're talking to and turn their attention to you. That was kind of the first design.

That question he just ask prompts some really interesting mechanics, so I'm going to say at this point it was designed to be single instanced modelled, but I wonder if there isn't something we can do fairly inexpensively to utilise group conversation. That's probably one of the first questions I've heard that made me go “wow, I didn't think of that”

BW: The other day in chat you shared a screenshot with two people chatting with kind of like a sidebar, with a really impressive like, you know depiction of two characters looking at each other and having a conversation, that immediately made me wonder of a war room setting or a conference room setting.

Would a similar experience be felt in those kinds of experiences?

Caspian: The screen you're referencing was to kind of talked more about the advanced mechanics, when you examine someone or interact with someone to do item trade or negotiating a contract you get this kind of side-view of the two characters and it's designed to really get you a feel of who you're talking to, it's also about your focus when you're talking to someone. Focus isn't really on them when you're negotiating with someone, your focus is entirely on the negotiating on hand and it's on them, even to the point when someone might bump you a little bit to pick your pocket or something like that. If you're busy negotiating a contract you're more likely to miss that, part of it is an intentional design mechanic your focus shifts away from the world around you, it's kind of a specialised screen so it's intentional.

So does it make sense to do that in like a larger setting, I think if we were to do that in a war room type setting the focus would be on the map and then you would also be able to see the characters on the screen in kind of a circular fashion. Like if you were playing an online gambling game, you've got the avatars around the circle and the focus is on the table.

BW: Are we talking about that focus on the game, or focus on the conversation would group interaction on that level going to be something to be support or something to consider.

Caspian: Oh we we were already planning on doing group based table games in a tavern, so that is a mechanic, so we just never really considered group conversations that's more just about social element or group based negotiations or group based war room type setting, that's just never something we thought of or worked out. But certainly the mechanics of group mechanics or group initiative are there, it's just the focus is more on what you are doing on the table of cards or roulette type thing or something like that.

BW: Jouten asks "Can you place items "anywhere" in the world? Like stashing illegal substances behind a bench or throwing raw meat on some vendors table?"

Caspian: Yes you can, probably going to regret saying that, the way the system works right now is that you have the ability to pickup items, pretty much any item in the world that you're allowed there's legal versus illegal to and then you put it down again. And when when you put it down again you get the little ghosting model that tells you where you're about to put this, and when you finish your operation you put it there.

BW: Psyso asks " I heard something about Dragons being sentient creatures in CoE. Could you elaborate on their existence/role in the game if this is true?"

Caspian: I can't elaborate too much, I've actually been working on a the visual identity of a dragon will definitely be in the world somehow, we have a twist that in our lore that will surprise people and I don't want to share that again because it's lore based. I don't want to break the lore that any particular story director will come on and wanna do. At the same time, it's one of those things maybe I just throw it out there and it's just subject to change and it's one of those fun things.

So this is subject to change but I'm going to leak something now for the fun of it. You know in the lore we talked about there being Daemon the God of Fire, he's the blacksmith type character but also the fire god effectively, and we know that he has his children and the Children of Daemon are what we refer to in the world as Daemons. It was logical to us then that thus far, everything we've always ever referred to as Daemon's while people might have visualised them looking like what you would consider a Demon, we were actually using the word Daemon as synonym for Dragon.

BW: Any playable Daemons.

Caspian: Not at this point, that has not been part of the plan, at least not at the time being. So that's the thing, we always talk about their being these Daemons, beings of fire that come from the fire realm, it just makes sense that those be Dragon's. The first time someone sees a Daemon, there will probably be a surprise if they don't hear this live chat that it looks like a Daemon.

BW: KnightsBayne “Can you release any lore about the different races of Mann?”

Caspian: I can but I’m not going to, again this is kinda one of those things. I’m shying away from lore as much as I can, we have the lore but it’s my lore. It’s not to say that my lore is bad, but if we get the story director that we’re looking for, their lore is going to be so much better than anything I can come up with. Even not knowing what their suggestions is going to be it’s going to be so much better than what I can come up with and so I’m hesitant to lock us into anything at this point, because I feel like everything I come forward with at this point. This is cannon and this is the lore of the world, it just makes it that much more difficult to come in and do what they want to do and showcase their creativity. At this point the fact we have different version of Mann, you know different races that have evolved from their time in Elyria is already kind of locking us in, and I’m not going to change that. That’s kind of one of those things they can’t really go back and change it as a result of locking us in on that.

BW: KnightsBayne asks “What do the tree-faring folk look like?”

Caspian: We can, so as you can imagine we had said, in one of the design journals, we talked about most of the people who are the tree fairing folks that climb around a lot, that are often reaching for things that are high-up, going from vine to vine or branch to branch so they kind of naturally evolved to be a taller race to allow them to reach heights greater to their peers would. As well as the noise of the jungle made it harder for them to hear, they needed to develop very sensitive hearing because of the cats and insects and locus and anybody that’s spent any amount of time in a jungle know the Cicada and Locus there are just ridiculous. So as a result of that, they’ve developed naturally larger ears. So I’m not going to make any analogy there, I’ll let you draw your own conclusion, but there is visible, slight visual adaptations that reflect kind of this taller/leaner more muscular in a lean way, slightly longer eared individuals.

BW: KnightsBayne asks “Can you describe different cultures of those races?”

Caspian: That’s going into the Lore bore, the culture stuff is going to touch too much on what the story director might want to do with those specific races. I’ll leave that one off for now.

BW: Well that concludes our Question and Answer section... do you have any new announcements?

Caspian: No big announcements, obviously we had the Design Journal that came out the end of last week that talks about the business model we have that is kind of a pay 2 play model. We do plan on having another one coming out later this week, pending us being able to make some conclusion on things, we’ve kinda thrown out there and are discussing right now. Also everyone is eagerly awaiting the announcement of our Kickstarter campaign, we’re going to make an announcement about that by the end of January. We should have a pretty good decision on what that dates gonna be, we do have a date in mind now, we just want to make sure we gonna be able to land that and that has a lot to do with what we’re doing this month.

Not because we're doing a lot of work right now, but because we came into some other resources as people know. I sold off all my land and are using the resources to fund the latter part of the development of the kickstarter. So we're moving into office space, we're closing on an agreement that'll give us a 2600 sq ft office building in bellevue that will allow us to hire new people, because right now we're running out of space. So we're looking at hiring an animator some 3D environment artists another programmer, a producer who's also a designer friend of mine that will be helping making decisions on some of these things.

So that the staff we get between now and the end of Jan will help us anticipate when we'll be able to land our target date, we'll definitely know by the end of the month when we'll make that be able to happen.

BW: How about that Design Journal we were looking forward today.

Caspian: Later this week, once we nail down what we want to do. I could upset the entire roleplaying game world just by throwing out what we were talking about doing today, it was a rhetorical question that kind of led to a discussion. I could throw that out there, it would just disrupt everything you knew about roleplaying games so I'm not going to.